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The Way Home

by D. L. Moody

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THE WAY HOME

BY

D. L. MOODY

I am the Way, ... No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.—John 14:6.

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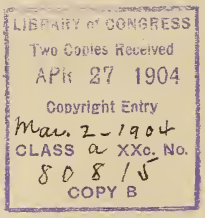

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PREFACE.

For some time before my father was taken from our midst, it had been his purpose to collect a number of his more directly Gospel addresses for publication in book form. Now, after more than four years, the compilation has been made by Mr. A. P. Fitt, who assisted my father in several similar lines of work. It was his earnest desire that this new book might be the means of bringing men to a knowledge of God as Father, and he proposed to call it "The Way Home."

It is our sincere prayer that in this new book there may be realized the fact that "he, being dead, yet speaketh," and (as ever of old) with zeal to bring men to a knowledge of God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

W. R. Moody.

E. Northfield, Mass.

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THE WAY HOME.

CHRIST'S BOUNDLESS COMPASSION.

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick.—Matthew 14:14.

It is often recorded in Scripture that Jesus was moved by compassion. We are told in this verse that after the disciples of John had come to Him and told Him that their master had been beheaded, that he had been put to a cruel death, He went out into a desert place, and the multitude followed Him, and that when He saw the multitude He had "compassion" on them, and healed their sick.

If He were here to-night in person, standing in my place, His heart would be moved as He looked down into your faces, because He could also look into your hearts and could read the burdens and troubles and sorrows you have to bear. They are hidden from my eye, but He knows all about them. When the multitude gathered round about Him, He knew how many weary broken and aching hearts there were there. And He is here to-night, although we cannot see Him with the bodily eye, and there is not a sorrow, or trouble, or affliction which any of you are enduring but He knows all about it; and He is the same to-night as He was when here upon earth—the same Jesus, the same Man of compassion.

When He saw that multitude He had compassion on them, and healed their sick. I hope He will heal a great many sin-sick souls here, and will bind up a great many broken hearts. There is no heart so bruised and broken but the Son of God will have compassion upon you, if you will let Him. "He will not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." He came

into the world to bring mercy, and joy, and compassion, and love.

If I were an artist I should like to draw some pictures to-night, and put before you that great multitude on which He had compassion. I would draw another painting of that man coming to Him full of leprosy, full of it from head to foot. There he was, banished from his home, banished from his friends, and he comes to Jesus with his sad and miserable story. And now, my friends, let us

MAKE THE BIBLE STORIES REAL,

for that is what they are.

Think of that man. Think how much he had suffered. I don't know how many years he had been away from his wife and children and home; but there he was. He had put on a strange and particular garb, so that anybody coming near him might know that he was unclean. When he saw anyone approaching him, he had to raise the warning cry, "Unclean! unclean! unclean!" Aye, and if the wife of his bosom were to come out to tell him that a beloved child was sick and dying, he durst not come near her, he was obliged to fly. He might hear her voice at a distance, but he could not be there to see his child in its last dying moments. He was, as it were, in a living sepulchre; it was worse than death! There he was, dying by inches, an outcast from everybody and everything, and not a hand put out to relieve him. Oh, what a terrible life!

Then think of him coming to Christ, and when Christ saw him, the Bible says He was moved with compassion. He had a heart that beat in sympathy with the poor leper, He had compassion on him. The man came to Him, and said,

"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean!"

He knew there was no one to do it but the Son of God Himself.

The great heart of Christ was moved with compas-

sion towards him. Hear the gracious words that fell from His lips—

"I will; be thou clean!"

The leprosy fled, and the man was made whole immediately.

Look at him now on his way back home to his wife and children and friends! No longer an outcast, no longer a loathsome thing, no longer cursed with that terrible leprous disease, but going back to his friends rejoicing.

Now, my friends, you may say you pity a man who was that bad off, but did it ever strike you that you are a thousand times worse off? The leprosy of the soul is far worse than the leprosy of the body. I would rather a thousand times have my body full of leprosy than go down to hell with my soul full of sin. A good deal better that this right hand of mine were lopped off, that this right foot should decay, and that I should go halt and lame and blind all the days of my life, than be banished from God by the leprosy of sin. Hear the wailing and the agony and the woe that is going up from this earth caused by sin! If there is one poor sin-sick soul filled with leprosy here to-night, if you come to Christ He will have compassion on you, and say, as He did to that man,

"I will; be thou clean."

THE DEAD RAISED.

Well, now we come to the next picture that represents Him as moved with compassion.

Look into that little home at Nain. There is a poor widow sitting there. Perhaps a few months before she had buried her husband, but she has an only son left. How she dotes upon him! She looks to him to be her stay and her support and friend in her old age. She loves him far better than her own life-blood. But see, at last sickness enters the dwelling, and death comes with it, and lays his ice-cold

hand upon the young man. You can see that widowed mother watching over him day and night; but at last those eyes are closed, and that loved voice is hushed, she thinks, for ever. She will never see or hear him more after he is buried out of her sight.

And so the hour comes for his burial. Many of you have been in the house of mourning, and have been with your friends when they have gone to the grave and looked at the loved one for the last time. There is not one here, I dare say, who has not lost some beloved one. I never went to a funeral and saw a mother take the last look at her child but it has pierced my heart, and I could not keep back the tears at such a sight.

Well, the mother kisses her only son on that poor, icy forehead. It is her last kiss, her last look, and the body is covered up, and they put him on the bier and start for the place of burial. She had a great many friends. The little town of Nain was moved at the sight of the widow's only son being borne away.

I see that great crowd as they come pushing out of the gates. Over yonder are thirteen men, weary, and dusty, and tired, and they have to stand by the wayside to let this great crowd pass by. The Son of God is in this group, and the others with Him are His disciples.

He looked upon that scene, and saw the mother with her broken heart; He saw it bleeding, crushed, and wounded, and it touched His heart. Yes, the great heart of the Son of God was moved with compassion, and He came up and touched the bier, and said,

"YOUNG MAN, ARISE!"

and the young man sat up.

I can see the multitude startled and astonished. I can see the widowed mother going back home rejoicing, with the morning rays of the resurrection shining in her heart. Yes, He had compassion on her

indeed! And there is not a widow in this hall but Christ's voice will respond to your trouble and give you peace. Oh, dear friends, let me say to you whose hearts are aching, you need a friend like Jesus! He is just the friend the widow needs. He is just the friend every poor bleeding heart needs. He will have compassion on you, and will bind up your wounded, bleeding heart if you will only come to Him just as you are. He will receive you, without upbraiding or chastising, to His loving bosom, and say, "Peace, be still," and you can walk in the unclouded sunlight of His love from this night. Christ will be worth more to you than all the world besides. He is just the friend that all of you need; and I pray God you may every one of you know Him from this hour as your Saviour and friend.

THE MAN WHO WAS ROBBED.

The next picture which I shall show you to illustrate Christ's compassion is of the man that was going down to Jericho and fell among thieves.

They had taken away his coat. They took his money, and stripped him, and left him half dead. Look at him wounded, bleeding, dying! And now comes down the road a priest, and he looks upon the scene. His heart might have been touched, but he was not moved with compassion enough to help the poor man. He might have said, "Poor fellow!" but he passed by on the other side, and left him.

After him came down a Levite, and perhaps he said, "Poor man!" but he was not moved with compassion to help him.

Ah, there are a good many like that priest and Levite! Perhaps some of you coming down to this hall meet a drunkard reeling in the street, and just say "Poor fellow!" or it may be you laugh because he stammers out some foolish thing. We are very unlike the Son of God.

At last a Samaritan came down that way, and he looked on the man and had compassion on him! He got off his beast, took oil and poured it into the man's wounds, bound them up, took him out of the ditch, helpless as he was, placed him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him!

That good Samaritan represents your Christ and mine. He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost.

Young man, have you come to the city, and fallen in with bad companions? Have they taken you to theatres and places of vice, and left you bleeding and wounded? Oh, come to-night to the Son of God, and He will have compassion on you, and take you off from the dunghill, and transform you, and lift you up into His kingdom, into the heights of His glory, if you will only let Him! I do not care who you are. I do not care what your past life may have been. He said to the poor woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." He had compassion upon her, and He will have compassion on you. That man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho represents thousands in our large cities, and that good Samaritan represents the Son of God. Young man, Jesus Christ has set His heart on saving you! Will your receive His love and compassion? Do not have such hard thoughts about the Son of God. Do not think He has come to condemn you. He has come to save you.

AN UNGRATEFUL WRETCH.

But I should like to draw another picture—that young man going away from his home that we read of in the 15th chapter of Luke; an ungrateful man, as ungrateful a wretch as ever one saw. He can not wait for his inheritance till his father is dead, he wants his share at once, and so he says to his father,

"Give me the goods that belong to me."

His good old father gives him the goods, and away he goes.

I can see him as he starts on his journey, full of pride, boastful and arrogant, going out to see life, off in grand style to some foreign country—say, going down to London. How many have gone to London, that being the far country to them, squandering all their money!

Yes, he is a popular young man as long as he has money. His friends last as long as his money lasts. A very popular young man, "hail-fellow-well-met" greets him everywhere. He always pays the liquor bill and cigars. Yes, he has plenty of friends! What grand folly!

But when his money was gone, where were his friends? Oh, you that serve the devil, you have a hard master! When the prodigal's money was all gone, of course they laughed at him, and called him a fool; and so he was.

What a blind, misguided young man he was! Just see what he lost. He lost his father's home, his table and food, and testimony, and every comfort. He lost his work, except what he got down there while feeding swine. He was in an unlawful business. And that's just what the backslider is doing; he is

IN THE DEVIL'S PAY.

You are losing your time and testimony. No one has any confidence in a backslider, for even the world despises such a character.

This young man lost his testimony. Look at him amongst the swine! Some one in that far country comes along, and, beholding him, says,

"Look at that miserable, wretched, dirty, barefooted fellow taking care of swine!"

"Ah," says the prodigal, "don't talk to me like that. Why, my father's a rich man, and has got servants better dressed than you are."

"Don't tell me that!" says the other; "if you had such a father as that, I know very well he wouldn't own you."

No one would believe him. No one believes a backslider. Let him talk about his enjoyment with God, nobody believes it. Oh, poor backslider, I pity you! You had better

COME HOME AGAIN.

Well, at last the poor prodigal comes to himself, and says, "I will arise and go to my father," and now he starts for home. Look at him as he goes along, pale and hungry, with his head down! His strength is exhausted, perhaps he is diseased in his frame, and so shattered that no one would know him but his father. But love is keen to detect its object. The old man has often been longing for his return.

I can see him many a night up on the house-top looking out to catch a glimpse of him. Many a long night he has wrestled in prayer with God that his prodigal son might come back. Everything he had heard from that far country told him his boy was going to ruin as fast as he could go. The old man spent much time in prayer for him. At last faith begins to arise, and he says,

"I believe God will send back my boy."

One day the old man sees afar off the long-lost boy. He does not know him by his dress, but he detects his gait, and he says to himself,

"Yes, that's my boy!"

I see him pass down the stairs, he rushes along the highway, he is running! Ah! that is just like God. Many a time in the Bible God is represented as running; He is in great haste to meet the backslider. Yes, the old man is running; he sees his son afar off, and he has compassion on him.

The boy wanted to tell him his story, what he had done, and where he had been, but the old man could

not wait to hear him; his heart was filled with compassion, and he took him to his loving bosom. The boy wanted to go down into the kitchen with the servants, but the old man would not let him. No, but he bade the servants put shoes on his feet, and a ring on his finger, and kill the fatted calf, and make merry. The prodigal has come home, the wanderer has returned, and the old man rejoices over his return.

Oh, backslider, come home, and there will be joy in your heart and in the heart of God. May God bring the backsliders back to-night—this very hour! Say as the poor prodigal did, "I will arise and go to my father," and on the authority of God I tell you God will receive you. He will blot out your sins, and restore you to His love, and you shall walk again in the light of His reconciled countenance.

CHRIST WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM.

But look again. Jesus comes to Mount Olivet. He is under the shadow of the cross. The city bursts upon him. Yonder is the temple. He sees it in all its grandeur and glory. The people are shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" They are breaking off palm branches, and taking off their garments, and spreading them before Him, still shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" and bowing down before Him. But He forgets it all. Yes, even Calvary with all its sorrow He forgets. Gethsemane lay there at the foot of the hill; He forgot it too. As He looked upon the city which He loved, the great heart of the Son of God was moved with compassion, and He cried aloud,

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

My friends, look at Him there weeping over Jerusalem! What a wonderful city it might have been! How

exalted to heaven it was! Oh, if they had only known the day of their visitation, and had received instead of rejected their king, what a blessing He would have been to them! Oh, poor backslider, behold the Lamb of God weeping over you, and crying to you to come to Him, and receive shelter and refuge from the storm which has yet to sweep over this earth!

PETER'S DENIAL.

Now look at poor Peter. He denied the Lord, and swore he never knew Him. If ever Jesus needed sympathy, if ever He needed His disciples round Him, it was that night when they were bringing false witnesses against Him, that He might be condemned to death; and there was Peter, one of His foremost disciples, swearing he never knew Him. He might have turned on Peter and said,

"Peter, is it true you don't know Me? Is it true you have forgotten how I cured and healed your wife's mother when she lay at the point of death? Is it true you have forgotten how I caught you up when you were sinking in the sea? Is it true, Peter, you have forgotten how you were with Me on the mount of transfiguration, when heaven and earth came together, and you heard God's voice speaking from the clouds? Is it true you have forgotten that mountain scene when you wanted to build the three tabernacles? Is it true, Peter, you have forgotten Me?"

Yes, thus He might have taunted poor Peter; but instead of that He just gave him one look of compassion that broke his heart, and Peter went out and wept bitterly.

THE PERSECUTING SAUL.

Again, look at that bold blasphemer and persecutor who is going to stamp out the early church, and is breathing out threatenings and slaughter. when Christ

meets him on his way to Damascus. It is the same Jesus still. Listen, and hear what he says—

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

He could have smitten him to the earth with a look or a breath; but instead of that, the heart of the Son of God is moved with compassion, and He cries out,

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

If there is a persecutor here to-night, I would ask you, "Why persecute Jesus?" He loves you, sinner; He loves you, persecutor! You never received anything but goodness and kindness and love from Him.

Saul cried out, "Who art thou?"

And He answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. It is hard to fight against such a loving friend, to contend against one who loves you as I do."

Down went the proud, persecuting Saul upon his face, and he cried out,

"Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?"

And the Lord told him, and he went and did it.

May the Lord have compassion upon the infidel, and skeptic, and persecutor here! Let me ask you, my friend, Is there any reason why you should hate Christ, or why your heart should be turned against Him?

"WHY DON'T YOU LOVE JESUS?"

I remember a story about a teacher telling her scholars all to follow Jesus, and how they might all be missionaries, and go out to work for others. One day one of the smallest came to her, and said,

"I asked such and such a one to come with me, and she said she would like to come, but her father was an infidel."

The young child wanted to know what an infidel was, and the teacher went on to explain it to her.

One day, when she was on her way to school, this infidel was coming out of the post-office with his let-

ters in his hand, when the child ran up to him, and said,

"Why don't you love Jesus?"

He thought at first to push her aside, but the child pressed it home again—

"Why don't you love Jesus?"

If it had been a man, the infidel would have resented it; but he did not know what to do with the child. With tears in her eyes she asked him again,

"Oh! please, tell me, why don't you love Jesus?"

He went on to his office, but he felt as if every letter he opened read—"Why don't you love Jesus?" He attempted to write, with the same result; every letter seemed to ask him, "Why don't you love Jesus?" He threw down his pen in despair, and went out of his office, but he could not get rid of the question; it was asked by a still small voice within. As he walked along it seemed as if the very ground and the very heavens whispered to him, "Why don't you love Jesus?"

At last he went home, and there it seemed as if his own children asked him the question, so he said to his wife, "I will go to bed early to-night," thinking to sleep it away; but when he laid his head on the pillow it seemed as if the pillow whispered it to him. So he got up about midnight, and said,

"I can find out where Christ contradicts Himself, and I'll search it out and prove Him a liar."

Well, he got up, and turned to the Gospel of John, and read on from the beginning until he came to the words,

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"What love!" he thought; and at last the old infidel's heart was stirred. He could find no reason for not loving Jesus, and down he went on his knees and prayed, and before the sun rose he was in the kingdom of God.

I will challenge any one on the face of the earth to find any reason for not loving Christ. It is only here on earth men think they have a reason for not doing so. In heaven they know Him, and they sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" Oh, sinner, if you knew Him you would have no wish to find a reason for not loving Him! He is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

A QUESTION.

I can imagine some one saying, "I should like very much to become a Christian, and I should like to know how I can come to Him, and be saved."

Come to Him as a personal friend. For years I have made this a rule. Christ is just as habitually near, as personally present to me as any other person living; and when I have any troubles, trials and afflictions, I go to Him with them. When I want counsel I go to Him, just as if I could talk face to face with Him. Twenty years ago God met me and took me to His bosom, and I would sooner give up my life to-night than give up Christ, or that I should leave Him, or that He should leave me, and that I should have no one to bear my burdens, or tell my sorrows to. He is worth more than all the world beside. And to-night He will have compassion upon you as He had upon me. I tried for weeks to find a way to Him, and I just went and laid my burden upon Him, and then He revealed Himself to me, and I have ever since found Him a true and sympathizing friend, just the friend you need. Go right straight to Him! You need not go to this man or that man, to this church or that church. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," said Jesus.

There is no name so dear to Americans as that of Abraham Lincoln. Do you want to know the reason why? I will tell you. He was a man of compassion. He was very gentle, and was noted for his heart of

sympathy for the down-trodden and the poor. No one went to him with a tale of sympathy but he had compassion on them, no matter how far down they were in the scale of society. He always took an interest in the poor.

There was a time in our history when we thought he had too much compassion. Many of our soldiers did not understand army discipline, and a great many were not true to the army regulations. They intended to be, but they did not understand them. Many men consequently went wrong, and they were court-martialed and condemend to be shot; but Abraham Lincoln would always pardon them. At length the nation rose up against him, and said that he was too merciful, and ultimately they got him to give out that if a man was court-martialed he must be shot, that there would be no more reprieves.

A few weeks after this, news came that a young soldier had been sleeping at his post. He was court-martialed, and condemned to be shot. The boy wrote to his mother,

"I do not want you to think I do not love my country, but it came about in this way: My comrade was sick, and I went out on picket for him. The next night he ought to have come, but being still sick I went out for him again, and without intending it I fell asleep. I did not intend to be disloyal."

It was a very touching letter. The mother and father said there was no chance for him, there were to be no more reprieves. But there was a little girl in that home, and she knew that Abraham Lincoln had a little boy, and how he loved that boy; and she thought if Abraham Lincoln knew how her father and mother loved her brother he would never allow him to be shot. So she took the train to go and plead for her brother.

When she got to the president's mansion, the difficulty arose how was she to get past the sentinel. She told him her story, and the tears ran down his cheeks,

and he let her pass. But the next trouble was how to get past the secretary and the other officials. However, she succeeded in getting, unobstructed, into Lincoln's private room, and there were the senators and ministers busy with state affairs.

The president saw the child, and called her to him, and said,

"My child, what can I do for you?"

She told him her story. The big tears rolled down his cheeks. He was a father, and his heart was full; he could not stand it. He treated the girl with kindness, reprieved the boy, gave him thirty days furlough, and sent him home to see his mother. His heart was full of compassion.

Let me tell you, Christ's heart is more full of compassion than any man's. You are condemned to die for your sins; but if you go to Him He will say, "Loose him, and let him go." He will rebuke Satan. Go to Him as that little girl went to the president, and tell Him all. Keep nothing from Him, and He will say, "Go in peace."

THE TOUCH OF COMPASSION.

Did you ever feel the touch of the hand of Jesus? If so, you will know it again, for there is love in it.

There is a story told in connection with our war of a mother who received a dispatch that her boy was mortally wounded. She went down to the front, as she knew that those soldiers told off to watch the sick and wounded could not watch her boy as she would. So she went to the doctor, and said,

"Would you like me to take care of my boy?"

The doctor said, "We have just let him go to sleep, and if you go to him the surprise will be so great it might be dangerous to him. He is in a very critical state. I will break the news to him gradually."

"But," said the mother, "he may never wake up. I should so dearly like to see him."

Finally the doctor said, "You can see him, but if you wake him up and he dies, it will be your fault."

"Well," she said, "I will not wake him up if I may only go to his dying cot and see him."

She went to the side of the cot. Her eyes had longed to see him. As she gazed upon him she could not keep her hand off that pallid forehead, and she laid it gently there. There was love and sympathy in that hand, and the moment the slumbering boy felt it, he said,

"Oh, mother, have you come?"

He knew there was sympathy and affection in the touch of that hand. And if you, oh sinner, will let Jesus reach out His hand and touch your heart, you too will find there is sympathy and love in it. That every lost soul here may be saved, and come to the arms of our blessed Saviour, is the prayer of my heart!

WHAT SALVATION IS.

I BELIEVE this is a crisis in the history of a good many in this hall to-night. Thousands are just halting and wavering; they are almost persuaded. Many have come saying to themselves, "I don't want to go away without Christ; I want to be saved to-night." Well, I shall not preach a sermon to-night. I have just one thought, and that is to tell every anxious soul what they must do to be saved. That is the first question of every one who is honestly and really inquiring "the way of salvation," and, God helping me, I will try to make it plain to all.

BELIEVING.

If I say to you, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," you will reply, "Oh, believe! I have heard that word till I am sick and tired of it. Scarcely a week but I hear it in the church or at a prayer-meeting."

You have all heard it over and over again. I don't suppose there is a child here over five years of age but can repeat that text. What you want is to know how to believe—what it is to believe.

Some of you say, "We all believe that Christ came into the world to seek and to save the lost; and that he that believeth shall be saved."

But the devils believe, and are not saved. Aye, they believe and tremble! You must believe *on* the Lord Jesus Christ, and not merely *about* Him, and then you will know what salvation is.

RECEIVING.

We'll take another word which means the same thing; perhaps you'll get hold of it better. "He came unto His own, and His own *received* Him not. But as many as *received* Him, to them gave He power to

become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Bear in mind, "received *Him.*" That's it: not received a doctrine or a belief, but received *Him.* It is a Person we must receive.

My experience is that we all want to have the *power* before we receive Christ; that is, we want to *feel* we are in Christ before we will receive Him. But we cannot love God and feel His presence until we have received Him into our hearts. It is just like a boy with a ball. He throws it to you. Well, you must catch it before you can throw it back again. The real meaning of "believe" is "receive"—receive Christ as yours. I don't know any verse in the Bible that God has blessed to more souls than John 1:12: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power."

I don't know of any better illustration I could have than matrimony. The Bible uses it, and if God uses it in His Word, why should not I? In the Old Testament God says: "I am married unto you." (Jeremiah 3:14.) Jesus Himself uses the illustration when He speaks of the bride in John 3:29. Paul uses it in his epistles, as in Romans 7:4, as an illustration of the union between Christ and His church.

Now, it is an illustration you can all understand; there is no one here but knows what it means. When a man offers himself, the woman must do either of two things—either receive or reject him. So every soul in this hall must do one of these two things—"receive" or "reject" Christ. If you receive Him, that is all you have to do, He has promised you power to become a child of God.

THE RICH HUSBAND.

There was a shop-girl in Chicago, a few years ago. One day she could not have bought a dollar's worth of anything; the next day she could go and buy a thousand dollars' worth of whatever she wanted.

What made the difference? Why, she had married a rich husband; that was all. She had received him, and of course all he had became hers. And so you can have power if you only receive Christ. Remember, you can have no power without Him. You will fail, fail constantly, until you receive Him into your heart. And I have Scripture authority to say that Christ will receive every soul that will only come to Him.

SEEKING A WIFE.

Abraham sent his servant Eliezer a long journey to get a wife for his son Isaac. When Eliezer had got Rebekah, he wanted to be up and off with the young bride; but her mother and brother said,

"No, she shall wait awhile."

When Eliezer was determined to go, they said,

"We will inquire of the damsel."

When Rebekah appeared, they asked her,

"Wilt thou go with this man?"

That was a crisis in her life. She could have said "No." Undoubtedly it cost her an effort; it would, of course, be a struggle. She had to give up her parents, her home, her companions, all that she loved, and go with this stranger. But look at her reply! She said,

"I will go."

I have come to-night to get a bride for my Master. "Wilt thou go with this man?" I can tell you one thing that Eliezer could not tell Rebekah; he could not say, "Isaac loves you." Isaac had never seen his bride. But I can say, "My Master loves you! He gave Himself for you." Ah, that is love!

But bear in mind, my friend, that the moment Rebekah made up her mind to accept Isaac he became everything to her, so that she did not feel she was giving up anything for him. Ah, what a mistake some people make! They say, "I'd like to become a Christian if I hadn't to give up so much." Just turn

round and look at the other side. You don't have to give up anything—you have simply to receive; and when you have received Christ, everything else vanishes away pretty quick. Christ fills you, so that you don't feel these things to be worth a thought.

When a bride marries a man, it is generally love that prompts her. If any one is here that really loves a man, is she thinking of how much she will have to give up? No; that wouldn't be love. Love doesn't feed upon itself, it feeds upon the person who is loved. So, my friends, it is not by looking at what you will have to give up, but by looking at what you will receive, that you will be enabled to accept the Saviour.

WHAT IS CHRIST TO YOU?

What is He willing to be to you, if you will have Him? Won't you be made heirs of heaven, joint-heirs with Christ—to reign with Him for ever and ever—to be *His*—to be with Him where He is—to be what He is? Think, then, of what He is, and of what He gives. You don't need to trouble yourselves at present about what you have to give up. Receive Him, and all these things will appear utterly insignificant.

I used to think of what I would have to give up. I dearly loved many of the pleasures of this earth, but now I'd as soon go out into your streets and eat the dirt as do those things. God doesn't say, "Give up this and that." He says, "Here is the Son of My bosom—receive Him." When you do receive Him, everything else goes. Stop that talk about giving up! Let Christ save you, and all these things will go for nothing.

NO REGRETS.

Did you ever know a man or woman who regretted receiving Him? No man ever regretted receiving Christ; but I have heard of thousands who have been

followers of the devil, and have regretted it bitterly. And I notice that it is always the most faithful followers of the devil who are regretting it most.

My friends, accept my advice, and take Jesus with you when you leave this hall. Remember, He is the gift of God offered to *whosoever* will take Him. You belong to that class, don't you? Just take *Him;* that's the first thing you have to do. When you go to cut down a tree, you don't take the axe and commence to hew down the branches. No, you begin right down at the root. So here, you must take Christ, and then you will get power to resist the world, the flesh, and the devil.

RUTH AND ORPAH.

Now another case—Ruth and Orpah. Many are like these two young widows. A crisis had come in their lives; they had lost their husbands, and had been living up there in the mountains of Moab. Often had they visited the graves of their dear ones, and perhaps planted a few flowers there, and watered them with their tears.

Naomi is about to return to her native land, and they think they will go a bit of the road with her. It is a sad parting; but now the crisis comes. Down in the valley they embrace each other, and give the parting kiss. Then they both say they will go with Naomi, but she warns them of the difficulties and the trials which might await them. So Orpah says, "I will go back to my people"; but Ruth cannot leave her mother, and says she will go with her.

Orpah turns back alone. I can see her on the top of the hill. She stops, and turns round for a last look. And Naomi says to Ruth,

"Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back to her people, and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law."

What does Ruth say? "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for

whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

A BLESSED DECISION.

Orpah loved Naomi, but not enough to leave all for her; Ruth loved her mother-in-law so much that the leaving of her people seemed nothing to her. Oh, may God draw out all your hearts so that you may leave *all* and follow Him!

We never hear any more of Orpah; the curtain falls upon her life. Perhaps she died away up in the mountains of Moab, without God and without hope. But how different with Ruth! She becomes famous in history. She is one of the few women whose names have come along down the roll of ages; and she is brought into the royal line of heaven. I have an idea that God blessed her for that decision. And He will bless you if you decide in a like manner. Who will say to-night, as Ruth did, "I will follow thee; and thy God shall be my God"? Will anyone take up the language of Ruth? Is there not a Ruth here? If there is, the Master is calling.

TRUSTING.

I'll take another word. I have been speaking of "receive." The next word I call your attention to is "trust." Many get hold of that when they cannot get hold of "believe" or "receive."

You all know what it is to trust. If it were not for trust, there would be a terrible commotion in this building to-night. If you could not trust that the roof was firmly put up, you would get out pretty quick. If you could not trust these chairs to support you, how long would you sit on them? You wouldn't have come here at all if you didn't trust our word that there would be an address. Now, it is just the same trust that God wants. It is no miraculous trust or faith, but just the

same kind, only the object is different. Instead of trusting in these earthly things, or in an arm of flesh, you are asked to trust in the Son of God.

THE DUBLIN MERCHANT.

In Dublin I was once speaking to a lady in the inquiry-room, when I noticed a gentleman walking up and down before the door. I went forward, and said,

"Are you a Christian?"

He was very angry, and turned on his heel and left me.

The following Sunday night I was preaching about "receiving," and I put the question, "Who'll receive Him now?" That young man was present, and the question sank into his heart.

The next day he called upon me—he was a merchant in that city—and said,

"Do you remember me?"

"No, I don't."

"Do you remember the young man who answered you so roughly the other night?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, I've come to tell you I am saved."

"How did it happen?"

"Why, I was listening to your sermon last night, and when you asked, 'Who'll receive Him now?' God put it into my heart to say, 'I will'; and He has opened my eyes to see His Son now."

I don't know why thousands should not do that here to-night. If you are ever to be saved, why not now?

A FREE GIFT.

But another point you must remember—salvation is a free gift, and it is a free gift *for us.* Can you buy it? No, it is a free gift, presented to whosoever will receive it.

Suppose I were to say, I will give this Bible to

"whosoever" wants it; what have you got to do? Why, nothing but take it. But a man comes forward, and says,

"I'd like that Bible very much."

"Well, didn't I say 'whosoever'?"

"Yes; but I'd like to have you say my name."

"Well, here it is."

Still he keeps eyeing the Bible, and saying, "I'd like to have that Bible; but I'd like to give you something for it. I don't like to take it for nothing."

"My friend, I am not here to sell Bibles; take it, if you want it."

"Well, I want it; but I'd like to give you something for it. Let me give you a cent for it; though, to be sure, it's worth three or four dollars."

Suppose I take the penny. The man takes up the Bible and marches away home with it. His wife says,

"Where did you get that Bible?"

"Oh, I bought it."

Mark the point: when he gives the penny it ceases to be a gift. So with salvation. If you were to pay ever so little, it would not be a gift.

THE USELESSNESS OF TRYING.

Man is always trying to do something. This miserable word "try" is keeping thousands out of heaven. When I hear men speak of "trying," I generally tell them it is the way down to death and hell. I believe more souls are lost through "trying" than any other way. You have often tried, and as often failed; and as long as you keep trying you will fail. Drop that word, then, and take as your sure foothold for eternity, "trust." "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him"; that is the right kind of trust. Would to God that you would all say, "I will trust Him now, to-night"! Did you ever hear of any one going down to hell trusting in Jesus? I never did. This very night, if you commit yourself to Him, the battle will be over.

You are complaining you don't *feel* better. Well, remember, the child must be born before it can be taught. So we cannot learn of God until we receive Him. We must be born—born again—have the new birth, ere we can feel. Christ must be in us the hope of glory. How can He be in us if we don't receive Him and trust Him?

PRESENT SALVATION.

Another verse that has been used a great deal, and I rest my own salvation on it, is John 5:24. I trust God will write it on your hearts, and burn it down into your souls. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life." Thank God for that "hath"!

I had a few men in the inquiry-room one night who could not find peace. I said,

"Do you believe the Bible?"

"Yes, sir."

"I think I will prove you don't. Turn up John 5:24."

They turned it up.

"Read the verse."

"'He that heareth My Word—'"

"You believe that?"

"Yes, sir."

"'And believeth on Him that sent me'—you believe God sent Jesus?"

"Yes."

"Well, read on."

"'Hath everlasting life.'"

"You believe you *have* everlasting life?"

"No, we don't."

"Oh, I thought you didn't believe the Bible! What right have you to cut a verse in two, and say you believe the one half, but not the other? It plainly says that he who believes '*hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' If you believe God's words, you can say, 'I have

passed from darkness into light.' Just by resting on that one little word in the present tense we may have assurance now. We don't need wait till we die, and till the great day of judgment, to find it out."

"TAKE, TAKE!"

A lady in Glasgow came to me, and said, "Mr. Moody, you are always saying 'Take, take!' Is there any place in the Bible where it says 'Take,' or is it only a word you use? I have been looking in the Bible for it, but cannot see it."

"Why," I said, "the Bible is sealed with it; it is almost the last word in the Bible. 'And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life freely.'"

"Well," she said, "I never saw that before. Is that *all* I have to do?"

"Yes, the Bible says so."

And she took it, just there. God says, "Let him take"; who can stop us if God says it? All the devils in hell cannot hinder a poor soul from taking, if God says "Take." My friends are you going to "take" Christ to-night? Are you going to let these meetings pass without being able to look up and say, "Christ is my Saviour, God is my Father, heaven is my home"?

AN ANXIOUS INQUIRER.

A lady came to my house one night, anxious about her soul; but after some conversation she left without finding peace. She came again, and I asked,

"What is the trouble?"

"I haven't got peace."

I took her to this verse, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3: 36.) I just held up that little word "hath" to her, and turned also to John 5: 24, and 6: 47. There these words were spoken

by Jesus, and are all linked on to believing on the Son. After we had talked for some time, she looked in my face earnestly, and said, "I have got it!" and went away rejoicing in the Saviour's love.

If you seek life you can have it now, as you sit upon your seat. The word "hath" occurs again in Isa. 53:6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; . . . . and the Lord HATH laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Our iniquity has been laid upon Christ, and God is not going to demand payment twice. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

THE DEBT PAID.

Suppose I owe a man a thousand dollars and become a bankrupt; I have nothing to pay, so he might send me to prison. But suppose a friend hears of it, and says, "I don't want to see Moody taken to prison." So he pays the debt for me, and gets the receipt. When I see the receipt, I know that I am free. But the man finds out that I didn't pay it, and gets me hauled off to court. He says I must pay it myself, or go to prison. I show the receipt.

"Why," says the judge, "the debt is paid."

The man says, "Moody didn't pay it."

Would any judge in the land support him? No; the debt is paid, and cannot be demanded again. And if man don't ask payment twice, will God? No, certainly not! The case is this: the debt has been paid, our sins have been atoned for, Christ Himself has redeemed us, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with His precious blood; therefore we are free!

But remember, although salvation is so free for us, it cost God a great deal to redeem us. He had an only Son, and He gave Him up freely for us. What a wonderful gift! If you make light of so great a salvation how can you escape the damnation of hell?

THE GREAT QUESTION.

Now, one question: What are you going to do with Christ? You have got to settle that question. You may get angry, like a man a short time ago, who marched out of a church, saying, "What right has that man to make such a statement?" But it is true; you *must* settle it. Pilate wanted to shirk the responsibility, and sent Jesus to Herod; but he was forced to a decision. When the Jews forced him to decide, he washed his hands, and said he "was innocent of this just man's blood." But did that take away his guilt? No.

An angel may be here, hovering over this audience, and he is listening to what is said. Some one may say,

"I will receive Him; I will delay no longer."

Immediately the angel will wing his way right up to the pearly gates, and tell the news that another sinner has been saved. There will be a new song ringing through the courts of heaven over a sinner repenting. God will issue the command to write down his name in the book of life, and to get rooms ready for him in the new Jerusalem, where we all will soon be.

GUILTY, BUT SAFE.

A man was once being tried for a crime, the punishment of which was death. The witnesses came in one by one, and testified to his guilt; but there he stood, quite calm and unmoved. The judge and the jury were quite surprised at his indifference; they could not understand how he could take such a serious matter so calmly. When the jury retired, it did not take them many minutes to decide on the verdict "guilty"; and when the judge was passing the sentence of death upon the criminal, he told him how surprised he was that he could be so unmoved in the prospect of death.

When the judge had finished, the man put his hand in his bosom, pulled out a document, and walked out of the dock a free man. Ah, that was how he could be so calm! It was a free pardon from his king, which he had in his pocket all the time. The king had instructed him to allow the trial to proceed, and to produce the pardon only when he was condemned. No wonder, then, that he was indifferent as to the result of the trial. We who believe in Christ shall not come into judgment. We have got a pardon from the Great King, and it is sealed with the blood of His Son.

THE CHICAGO FIRE.

After the Chicago fire took place, a great many things were sent to us from all parts of the world. The boxes they came in were labelled "For the people who were burned out," and all a man had to do was to prove that he had been burned out, and he got a share. So here, you have but to prove that you are poor, miserable sinners, and there's help for you. If every man who is ruined and lost will cling to "try," there is no hope; but if he give it all up as a bad job, then Christ will save him. The law condemns us, but Christ saves us.

THE LOST SCHOLAR.

The superintendent of a Sabbath school in Edinburgh was walking down the street one day when he met a policeman, leading a little boy by the hand, who was crying bitterly. He stopped, and asked the policeman what was the matter with the boy.

"Oh," said the officer, "he has got lost."

The superintendent asked to look at him. They went to a lamp. and held up the little fellow. Why, in a moment the boy knew his superintendent, and flew to his arms. The gentleman took him from the policeman, and the boy was comforted. The law has got us, but let us flee into Jesus' arms, and we are safe.

A friend of mine told me of a poor Scotch lassie who was very anxious about her soul. He told her to read Isaiah 53. She replied,

"I canna read, and I canna pray; Jesus, take me as I am!"

That was the true way; and Jesus just took her as she was. Let Him take you this night, just as you are, and He will receive you into His arms.

THREE YEARS SEEKING JESUS.

One night, when preaching in Philadelphia, right down by the side of the pulpit there was a young lady whose eyes were riveted on me as if she were drinking in every word. It is precious to preach to people like that; they generally get good, even if the sermon be poor.

I got interested in her, and after I had done talking, I went and spoke to her.

"Are you a Christian?"

"No, I wish I was. I have been seeking Jesus for three years."

I said, "There must be some mistake."

She looked strangely at me, and said, "Don't you believe me?"

"Well, no doubt you thought you were seeking Jesus; but it don't take an anxious sinner three years to meet an anxious Saviour."

"What am I to do, then?"

"The matter is, you are trying to *do* something; you must just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Oh, I am sick and tired of the word, 'Believe, believe, believe!' I don't know what it is."

"Well," I said, "we'll change the word; take 'trust.'"

"If I say, I'll trust Him, will He save me?"

"No, I don't say that; you may *say* a thousand things, but if you *do* trust Him, He will save you."

"Well," she said, "I do trust Him; but," she added in the same breath, "I don't feel any better."

"Ah, I've got it now! You've been looking for feelings for three years, instead of for Jesus. Faith is up above, not down here."

People are often looking for feelings. If you got up a new translation of the Bible, and if the men who are translating it would only put in *feelings* instead of *faith,* what a rush there would be for that Bible! But if you look from Genesis to Revelation, you cannot find feelings attached to salvation. We must rise above feelings. So I said to this lady,

"You cannot control your feelings; if you could, what a time you'd have! I know I would never have the toothache or the headache."

THE DEVIL'S STRATAGEM.

"Feelings" is the last plank the devil sticks out, just as your feet are getting on the Rock of Ages. He sees the poor trembling sinner just finding his way to the Saviour, when he shoves out this plank, and the poor sinner thinks he's "all right now." Some sermon you have heard arouses you, but then you feel all right when you get on this plank. Six months after perhaps, you are dying, and the devil comes along when you think you're quite safe.

"Ah," he tells you, "that was my work; I made you feel good."

And where are you then? Oh, take your stand on God's Word, then you cannot fail! His Word has been tried for six thousand years, and it has not failed.

So I said to the lady, "Have no more to do with feelings; but, like Job, say, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' "

She looked at me a few minutes, and then, stretching out her hand to take mine, she said,

"Mr. Moody, I trust the Lord Jesus Christ to save my soul to-night."

Then she went to the elders and said the same words.

As she passed out she met one of the church officers, and shaking his hand, said again,

"I trust the Lord Jesus to save my soul."

Next night she was right before me again. I shall never forget her beaming face; the light of eternity was shining in her eyes! She went into the inquiry-room. I wondered what she was going there for, but when I got there, I found her with her arms round a lady friend, saying,

"It's only to trust Him! I have found it so."

From that night she was one of the best workers in the inquiry-room, and whenever I met a difficult case, I got her to speak to the person, and she was sure to help them.

"WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION."

Surely you can trust God to-night. You must have a very poor opinion of God if you cannot trust Him. You have only to come to Him thus—receive Him, trust Him. What more can you do, and what less can you do than trust Him? Is He not worthy of it? Now let us be perfectly still a moment, and while the voice of man is hushed, let us think of one passage of Scripture: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock!" Christ is standing at the door of your heart, knocking; and He says, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Will any one to-night pull back the bolts, and say, "Enter, thou welcome, thrice welcome One. Blessed Saviour, come in!"?

God grant that all here may do this!

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

I SHALL take for my text the one word "Gospel." There is not a word in the English language that is so little understood as this very word. We have heard it from our earliest childhood up. There is not a day with many of us but that we hear the word "Gospel." Many a man is a partaker of the Gospel a long time before he really knows the meaning of the word.

It means "good tidings." It would do us good sometimes to get a dictionary and hunt up the meaning of some of the words we use so often, some of these Bible words. It would change our ideas.

This would be a very joyful meeting to-night if every one really believed that the Gospel is good news. Let a boy bring a dispatch into this audience and hand it to any one here, if it brings good news you can see it immediately in the man's face; his face lights up when he opens the dispatch. You can see he really believes it. And if it is really good news, if it brings him the tidings of a long-lost boy coming home, if his wife is sitting next to him, he passes the dispatch to her; he wants her to have knowledge of it too. He does not wait for her to ask for it; he does not wait till they get home. So when I preach, if I am near enough to look into the eyes of those who really believe the Gospel, I see their faces light up and they look interested; but those who do not believe it put on a long face, and look as if I had brought them a death-warrant, or invited them to attend a funeral.

GOOD TIDINGS.

The Gospel is good tidings of great joy. No better news ever came out of heaven than the Gospel. No better news ever fell upon the ears of the family of man than the Gospel. Hark; hear those shepherds

talking to one another after the angels had gone away! They believed the message, and they were full of joy. You can see them on the way now to Bethlehem. They said, "Let us go and see what has taken place." And what was the message that the angels brought to those shepherds? "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour."

Now if those shepherds had been like a good many people at the present time, they would have said,

"We do not believe it is good news. It is all excitement. Those angels want to get up a revival. They are trying to excite us. Don't believe them!"

That is what Satan is saying now. "Don't believe that the Gospel is good news." Because he knows the moment a man believes good news, he just receives it. I never saw a man in all my life that did not like good news. And every man and woman that is under the power of the devil does not believe the Gospel is good news. The moment you are out from under his power and influence, then you believe it. May God grant that the Gospel may sink deep into your hearts, and that you may believe it and be saved!

"GOD'S SPELL."

It is the best news that ever came to this sin-cursed earth. It means "Good spell," or, in other words, "God's spell." We are dead in trespasses and sins, and God wants us to be reconciled. It is a Gospel of reconciliation, and God is calling from the heights of glory,

"Oh, men, I am reconciled, now be ye reconciled!"

We have glorious news to tell you—God is reconciled and beseeches His subjects to be reconciled. The great apostle says, "We beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The moment a man believes the Gospel, down goes his arm of rebellion, and the unequal controversy is over. A light from Calvary

crosses his path, and he can walk in unclouded sunshine, if he will. It is the privilege of every man and woman in this vast assembly from this hour to walk in unclouded sunshine if they will. What brought darkness into the world? Darkness came because of sin, and the man who does not believe the Gospel is blinded by the god of this world.

I like the Gospel, because it is the very best news I have ever heard. The reason I like to preach it is because it has done me so much good. A man cannot preach the Gospel until he believes it himself. He must know it down deep in his own heart before he can tell it out; and then he tells it out but very poorly at the best. We are very poor ambassadors and messengers; but never mind the messenger, take hold of the message—that is what you want. If a boy brought me good news to-night, I would not care about the look of the boy; I would not care whether he was black or white, learned or unlearned. The message is what would do me good. A great many look at the messenger instead of the message. Never mind the messenger! My friends, get hold of the message to-night. The Gospel is what saves, and what I want now is that you may believe the Gospel now.

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS.

Paul tells in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians what the Gospel is. He says, "I declare unto you the Gospel." And the first thing he states in the declaration to these Corinthians is this: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." That was the old-fashioned Gospel. I hope we never will get away from it. I don't want anything but that old, old story. Some people have itching ears for something new. Bear in mind there is no new Gospel. Christ died for our sins. If He did not, how are we going to get rid of them? Would you insult the Almighty by offering the fruits of this frail body to atone for sin? If Christ did

not die for our sins, what is going to become of our souls?

CHRIST RISEN.

Then he goes on to tell that Christ was buried, and that Christ rose again. He burst asunder the bands of death. Death could not hold Him.

I can imagine, when they laid Him in Joseph's sepulchre, if we could have been there, we should have seen Death sitting over that sepulchre, saying,

"I have Him. He is my victim. He said He was the resurrection and the life. Now I have Him in my cold embrace. Look at Him! There He is. He has had to pay tribute to me. Some thought He was never going to die. Some thought I would not get Him. But He is mine."

But look again! The glorious morning comes, and the Son of man bursts asunder the bands of death, and comes out of the sepulchre. We do not worship a dead God, but a Saviour who still lives. Yes, He rose from the grave!

Then they saw Him ascend. That is what Paul calls the Gospel: not only Christ's death and burial, but His ascension into heaven. He went up and took His seat at the right hand of God.

And He will come back again. The Gospel consists of five things: Christ's death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and coming again; for "I will come again," said He. Thanks be to God, He is coming back by-and-by! He will come and take the kingdom. He will sway His scepter from the rivers to the ends of the earth. A little while, and He shall rule and reign. Let us lift up our heads and rejoice that the time of our redemption draweth near.

Let us get back to the simple Gospel—Christ died for our sins. We must know Christ at Calvary first, as our Substitute, as our Redeemer; and the moment we accept Him as our Saviour and our Redeemer, then it is that we become partakers of the Gospel. The

moment I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as my Substitute, as my Saviour, that moment I get light and peace.

I know some people say, "Oh, it is not Christ's death, it is Christ's life. Do not be preaching so much about the death of Christ, preach about His life."

My friends, that never will save any one. Paul says, "I declare unto you the Gospel. Christ died"—not Christ lived—"Christ died for our sins," "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." Now when I accept Christ as my Saviour, as my Substitute, then I am justified from all things which I could not be by the law of Moses.

ENEMIES REMOVED.

The reason I like the Gospel is, that it has taken out of my path the worst enemies I ever had,—*death, sin* and *judgment.*

My mind rolls back twenty years, before I was converted, and I think how dark it used to seem at times as I thought of the future. There was death—what a terrible enemy it seemed! I was brought up in a little village in New England. It was the custom there when a person was buried to toll out the age of the person at the funeral. I used to count the strokes of the bell. Death never entered that village, and tore away one of the inhabitants, but I always used to count the tolling of the bell. Sometimes it would be away up between seventy and eighty, beyond the life allotted to man, when man seemed living on borrowed time. Sometimes it would be clear down in the teens, and death would take away one of my own age. It used to make a solemn impression on me. I used to be a great coward.

When it comes to death, some men say, "I do not fear it." I feared it, and felt terribly afraid when I thought of the cold hand of death feeling for the cords of life, and being launched into eternity, to go

to an unknown world. I used to have terrible thoughts of God; but they are all gone now. Death has lost its sting, and as I go through the world I can shout, when the bell is tolling,

"O death, where is thy sting?"

And I hear a voice come rolling down from Calvary,

"Buried in the bosom of the Son of God."

He robbed death of its sting; He took the sting of death into His own bosom. If you take a wasp, and just take the sting out of that wasp, you will not be afraid of it any more than you would of a little fly. The sting has been taken out. And you need not be afraid of death if you are in Christ. Christ died for your sin. The penalty, the wages of sin is death. Christ received the wages on Calvary, and therefore there is no condemnation for you. All that death can get now is this old Adam. I do not care how quickly I get rid of it. I will get a better body, a resurrected body, a glorified body, a body much better than this. Yes, my friends, "to die," says the apostle, "is gain." If a man is in Christ, let death come!

THE FEAR OF DEATH.

Suppose death should come stealing up into this pulpit, and should lay his cold, icy hand upon my heart, and it should cease to throb; I should rise to another world, and should be in the presence of the King. I should be absent from the body, but present with the Lord. That is not bad news. There is no use in trying to conceal it, death is an enemy to a man's rest. What a glorious thought then to think that when you die you will sink into the arms of Jesus, and that He will carry you away to yon world of light. A little while longer here, a few more tears, and then you can gain an unbroken rest in yon world of light! The Gospel turns that enemy into a friend, and you even shout for death.

Then I used to go and look into the cold, silent

grave, and I used to think of that terrible hour when I would have to be laid down in the grave, and this body would be eaten up with worms. But now the grave has lost its terror and gloom; I can go and look down into the grave and shout over it, and cry out,

"O grave, where is thy victory?"

And I hear a voice coming up from the grave. It is the shout of the Conqueror, of Him who has been down and measured the depth of it, of my Lord and Saviour:

"Because I live, ye shall live also!"

Yes, the grave has lost its victory. The grave has no terror to the man or woman who is in Christ Jesus. The Gospel takes that enemy out of the way.

THE SECOND ENEMY—SIN.

Again, I thought all my sins would be blazed out before the great white throne; that every sin committed in childhood and in secret, every secret thought and every evil desire, would be blazed out before the assembled universe; that every thing done in the dark would be brought to light. But thanks be to God, the Gospel tells me my sins are all put away in Christ! Out of love to my soul God has taken all my sins and cast them behind His back. That is a safe place to have sin: behind God's back. God never turns back; He always marches on. He will never see your sins if they are behind His back. That is one of His own illustrations.

Not a part of my sins: He takes them *all* out of the way. There is no condemnation to him that is in Christ Jesus. You may just pile up your sins till they rise up like a dark mountain, and then multiply them by ten thousand for those you cannot think of; and after you have tried to enumerate all the sins you have ever committed, just let me bring one verse in, and that mountain will melt away—

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

WHAT GOD CANNOT DO.

In Ireland a teacher once asked a little boy if there was anything that God could not do, and the little fellow said,

"Yes; He cannot see my sins through the blood of Christ."

That is just what He cannot do! The blood covers them.

Is it not good news to get rid of your sin? You come here a sinner, and if you believe the Gospel your sins are taken away. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." You shall be justified from all things, which you could not be by the law of Moses. By believing, or by receiving the Gospel, Christ becomes yours. Only think, young man, you are invited to accept the Gospel, you are invited to make an exchange—to get rid of all your sins, and to take Christ in the place of them. Is not that wonderful? What a foolish young man you will be not to make the bargain! The Lord says, "I will take your sins, and give you Myself in the place of them." But a great many say "No," and just hug sin to their bosom. May God help you to come, sinner, to-night, and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your way, your truth, and your life.

THE THIRD ENEMY—JUDGMENT.

There is another enemy which used to haunt me a good deal—judgment. I used to think that would be a terrible day when I should be summoned before God, and could not tell till then whether I should have a seat on His right hand or on His left. Until I stood before the great white throne of judgment I thought I could not tell whether I should hear the voice of God saying, "Depart from Me, ye cursed," or whether God would say, "Enter thou into the joy of

thy Lord." But the Gospel tells me that question is already settled—"There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Listen to this verse—"Verily, verily"—and when you see that word "Verily, verily" in Scripture you may know there is something very important coming, it means, "Mark what I tell you," or, "Truly, truly"—"Truly, truly, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath (h-a-t-h, hath) everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (that means, into judgment), but is passed from death unto life."

Well, then, I am not coming into judgment for sin! The question has been settled, because Christ was judged for me, and died in my stead, and I go free. Is not that good news?

I heard of a man praying that he might lay hold of eternal life. I could not have said amen to that prayer. I laid hold of eternal life years ago when I was converted. What is the gift of God if it is not eternal life? And that is what God wants to give to every one in this hall to-night, and it is the greatest gift that can be bestowed on any one down here in this dark world. If an angel came straight from the throne of God on to this platform, and proclaimed to this assembly that God had sent him here to offer to this audience any one thing they might ask, that each one should have his own petition granted, what would be the cry in this audience? There would be but one real cry coming up from you, and the shout would make heaven ring—"Eternal life! eternal life!" Everything else would vanish into insignificance.

There is not anything a man values more than his life. Let a man worth a million dollars be on a wrecked vessel, and if he could just save his life for six months by giving that million, he would give it in an instant. The gift of God is eternal life, and is it not one of the greatest marvels that we have to stand, and plead, and pray men to take this gift. May God help you to take it now! Do not listen to Satan any

longer. Reach out the hand of faith and take it now. Young man, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Trust Him to save you now, and then there will be no condemnation. Death will have lost his sting, the grave and its victory will be safe out of the way, and the judgment will be past for you. Believe the Gospel. Lay hold of eternal life while God is offering it to you. Be reconciled to-night! Take your stand hard by the cross, and you are saved for time and eternity. I am told that at Rome, if you go up a few steps on your hands and knees, that is nine years out of purgatory. If you take one step now you are out of purgatory for time and eternity. You used to have two steps into glory—out of self into Christ, out of Christ into glory. But there is a shorter way now with only one step—out of self into glory, and you are saved. May God help you to take the step now! Flee, my friends, to-night to Calvary, and get under the shadow of the cross.

THE FIRE ON THE PRAIRIE.

Out in our western country, in the autumn, when men go hunting, and there has not been any rain for months, sometimes the prairie grass catches fire, and there comes up a strong wind, and the flames just roll along twenty feet high over that western desert at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour, consuming man and beast. When the hunters see it coming, what do they do? They know they cannot run as fast as the fire can run. Not the fleetest horse can escape from that fire. They just take a match and light the grass around them, and let the flames sweep on, and then they get into the burnt district and stand safe. They hear the flames roar as they come along, they see death coming towards them, but they do not fear, they do not tremble, because the fire has swept over the place where they are, and there is no danger. There is nothing for the fire to burn.

There is one mountain peak that the wrath of God has swept over—mount Calvary; and the fire spent its fury upon the Son of God. Take your stand there by the cross, and you will be safe for time and eternity. Escape for your life! flee to yon mountain, and you will be saved this very minute. Oh, may God bring you to Calvary under the shadow of the cross to-night! Then let death and the grave come. We will shout, "Glory to God in the highest." We will laugh at death, and glory in the grave, knowing that we are safe, sheltered by the precious blood of the Lamb. There is no condemnation to him that is in Christ Jesus.

"NOW" AND "TO-MORROW."

"Now" is one of the words of the Bible the devil is afraid of. He says, "Do not be in a hurry; there is plenty of time; do not be saved now." He knows the influence of that word "now." "To-morrow" is the devil's word. The Lord's word is "now." He says, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Scarlet and crimson are two fast colors; you cannot get the color out without destroying the garment. God says, "Though your sins be as scarlet and crimson, I will make them as wool and snow. I will do it." That is the way God reasons. He puts the pardon before the sinner the first thing. That is a queer way of reasoning, but God's thoughts are not our thoughts; and so, my friends, if you want to be saved, the Lord says He will pardon you.

THE GOVERNOR IN THE CONDEMNED CELL.

A few years ago, when Pennsylvania had a Christian governor, there was a young man who was arrested for murder. He was brought before the court, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death. His friends

thought there would be no trouble in getting a reprieve or pardon. Because the governor was a Christian man, they thought he would not sign the death-warrant. But he signed it.

They called on the governor, and begged of him to pardon the young man, but he said,

"No, the law must take its course, the man must die."

I think the mother of the young man called on the governor and pleaded with him, but he stood firm, and said,

"No, the man must die."

A few days before the man was to be executed, the governor took the train to the county where the man was imprisoned. He went to the sheriff of the county, and said to him,

"I wish you to take me to that man's cell, and leave me alone with him a little while, and do not tell him who I am till I am gone."

The governor went to the prison, talked to the young man about his soul, and told him that although he was condemned by man to be executed, God would have mercy upon him and save him if he would accept pardon from God. He preached Christ, and told him how Christ came to seek and to save sinners; and having explained as he best knew how the plan of salvation, he got down and prayed, and after praying he shook hands with him and bade him farewell.

Some time after the sheriff passed by the condemned man's cell, and he called him to the door of the cell, and said,

"Who was that man that talked and prayed with me so kindly?"

The sheriff said, "That was Governor Pollock."

The man turned deathly pale, and he threw up both his hands, and said,

"Was that Governor Pollock? was that kind-hearted man the governor? Oh, sheriff, why did not you tell me? If I had known that was the governor, I would

have fallen at his feet and asked for pardon; I would have pleaded for pardon and for my life. Oh, sir, the governor has been here, and I did not know it."

Sinner, I have got good news to tell you. There is one greater than the governor here to-night, and He wants to pardon every one. He does not want you to go away condemned. He wants to bring you from under condemnation, to pardon every soul. Will you have the pardon, or will you despise the gift of God? Will you despise the mercy of God? Oh, this night, while God is beseeching you to be reconciled, let me join with your praying mother, with your praying father, with your godly minister, with your Sabbath-school teacher, and all your praying friends; let me join my voice with theirs to plead with you to-night to be reconciled! Make up your mind now, while I am speaking, that you will not cross your threshold until you are reconciled, and there will be joy in heaven to-night over your decision. Oh, may God bring hundreds to a decision to-night!

RECONCILIATION.

An Englishman told me some time ago a story which illustrates the truth of reconciliation. God is reconciled. You must accept what He has done.

The story is this: There was an Englishman who had an only son; and only sons are often petted, humored, and ruined. This boy became very headstrong, and very often he and his father had trouble. One day they had a quarrel, and the father was very angry, and so was the son; and the father said he wished the boy would leave home and never come back. The boy said he would go, and would not come into his father's house again till he sent for him. The father said he would never send for him.

Well, away went the boy. But even though a father gives up a boy, a mother does not. You mothers will understand that, but the fathers may not. You

know there is no love on earth so strong as a mother's love. A great many things may separate a man and his wife; a great many things may separate a father from a son; but there is nothing in the wide world that can ever separate a true mother from her child. To be sure, there are some mothers that have drunk so much liquor, that they have drunk up all their affection. But I am talking about a true mother; and she would not cast off her boy.

This mother began to write to and plead with her son to write to his father first, and his father would forgive him; but the boy said,

"I will never go home till father asks me."

She pleaded with the father, but the father said,

"No, I will never ask him."

At last the mother was brought down to her sick bed, broken-hearted. When she was given up by the physicians to die, the husband, anxious to gratify her last wish, wanted to know if there was not anything he could do for her before she died. The mother gave him a look; he well knew what it meant. Then she said,

"Yes, there is one thing you can do, you can send for my boy. That is the only wish on earth you can gratify. If you do not pity him and love him when I am dead and gone, who will?"

"Well," said the father, "I will send word to him that you want to see him."

"No," she said, "you know he will not come for me. If ever I see him you must send for him."

At last the father wrote a dispatch in his own name, asking the boy to come home. As soon as he got the invitation from his father, he started off to see his dying mother.

When he opened the door to go in, he found his mother dying and his father by the bedside. The father heard the door open, and saw the boy, but instead of going to meet him he went to another part of the room, and refused to speak to him. His mother

seized his hand—how she had longed to press it! She kissed him, and then said,

"Now, my son, just speak to your father. You speak first, and it will all be over."

But the boy said, "No, mother, I will not speak to him until he speaks to me."

She took her husband's hand in one hand and the boy's in the other, and spent her dying moments and strength in trying to bring about a reconciliation. Just as she was expiring, she could not speak, so she put the hand of the wayward boy into the hand of the father, and passed away. The boy looked at his mother, the father at his wife; and at last the father's heart broke, and he opened his arms, and took that boy to his bosom, and by that body they were reconciled.

Sinner, that is only a faint type, a poor illustration, because God is not angry with you. I bring you to Calvary's cross. I ask you to look at the wounds in the hands and feet of Jesus, and the wound in His side. Gaze upon His five wounds! And I ask you will you not be reconciled? When Jesus left heaven, He came down to the manger that He might get hold of the vilest sinner, and put the hand of the wayward prodigal into that of the Father, and He died that you and I might be reconciled. If you take my advice, you will not go out of this hall to-night until you are reconciled.

Oh, this Gospel of reconciliation! Come home to-night! Your Father wants you to come. Say as the prodigal did of old, "I will arise and go to my father," and there will be joy in heaven!

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

You will find my text in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah:

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

Five times that little word "our" is used—*our* sorrows, *our* griefs, *our* iniquities, *our* transgressions, and the chastisement of *our* peace—there is a Substitute for you! I would like, if I could, to make that fifty-third chapter of Isaiah real. I would like, if I could, to bring before this congregation this truth—that Christ has suffered for each one of us. We take up the Bible, we read the account of His crucifixion and death, how He suffered in agony; and we lay the Bible down, go away, and think nothing more about it.

When the war was going on I would read about a great battle having been fought, where probably thousands of men had been killed and wounded; and after reading the article I would lay the paper aside and forget all about it. At last I went into the army myself. I saw the dying men. I heard the groans of the wounded. I helped to comfort the dying, and bury the dead. I saw the scene in all its terrible realities. After I had been on the battlefield, I could not read an account of a battle without it making a profound impression upon me.

I wish I could bring before you in living colors the sufferings and death of Christ. I do not believe there would be a dry eye here. I want to speak of His physical suffering; for that I think we can lay hold of. No man knows or can know what Christ's mental sufferings were.

When a great man dies, we are all anxious to get his last words; and if it is a friend, how we treasure up that last word—how we tell it to his friends! and we never tire of talking to our loved ones of how he made his departure from the world. Now let us visit Calvary.

BACK IN JERUSALEM.

Let us go back in imagination to the time of Christ's crucifixion, and suppose we are living in the city of Jerusalem.

Take the last Tuesday He spent with His disciples before He was crucified, and imagine we are walking in one of the streets of Jerusalem. We see a small body of men walking down the street; many are running to see what the excitement is. As we get nearer, we find that it is Jesus with His disciples. Let us walk down the street with them, and see them enter a common-looking house. They go in, and we enter also; and there we find Jesus sitting with the disciples. You can see sorrow depicted upon His brow. His disciples see it, but do not know what has caused His grief. We are told that "He was sorrowful unto death."

Some one has said, "Our Lord's last hours must have been a great mystery to the twelve disciples. He had filled Jerusalem with wonder at the resurrection of Lazarus; and here He was talking about death—He who could raise a dead man that had been already in his grave four days! What did it mean?"

"And as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray Me. And they were exceedingly sorrowful; and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord, is it I? And He answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me. The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then, Judas,

which betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said."

Soon after, Christ said to Judas, "What thou doest do quickly." Then Judas left the room. For three years he had been associated with the Son of God. For three years he had sat at the feet of Jesus. For three years he had heard those words of sympathy and love that had fallen from His lips. For three years Judas had been one of "the twelve." He had seen Jesus perform His wonderful miracles; he had heard the parables as they fell from the lips of the Saviour. For three years he had seen what the prophets would have been glad to see; he had been exalted to heaven with privileges. And Judas goes out into the night—the darkest night that this world ever saw—the saddest parting that ever took place on this earth; he goes out into darkness, despair, remorse, and death. Hear him as he goes down those steps, off into the darkness and blackness of the night! He went to the Sanhedrim, and to the chief priests, "and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver."

SELLING JESUS.

That was a small amount! Men condemn Judas; but how many are selling Christ for less than he did! How many give up Him, and all hope of heaven, for less than thirty pieces of silver! There are men who will sell Him for a little pleasure, and women who will sell Him for two or three hours in a ball-room!

You can hear the money being counted. Judas puts it into the bag. He says,

"Give me a band of men, and I will take you where He is."

It was on that night that Jesus said to His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Instead of the disciples trying to comfort Jesus, He tries to cheer them. He took them "unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with He. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.

"And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done. And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

"Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me."

He that knew no sin was to bear all our sins. He who was as spotless as the angels of heaven was to suffer for us. From this lone spot His earnest prayers ascended to heaven.

THE ARREST.

He sees the men who are hunting for Him. They

are looking around through the olive trees for some one. He well knows whom they the looking for. He went up to this band of men and said,

"Whom seek ye?"

And they said, "We seek Jesus of Nazareth."

"I am He."

There was something about that reply that terrified those men. They trembled, and fell to the ground. Then Judas came up; and I do not know but he put his arms around His neck and kissed Him. When Judas had kissed Christ, the soldiers seized Him; for Judas had told them that when they saw him kiss a man, that was He. Those hands that had wrought so many wonderful miracles, those hands that had often been raised to bless the disciples, were bound. Then Peter draws his sword, and cuts off the high priest's servant's ear. But Jesus healed the wound at once. He would not let the man suffer. He did not come to destroy life, but to save.

Then they take Him back to Jerusalem. We can see the soldiers and the populace mocking Him. They led Him away to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest; and by Annas he was sent to Caiaphas.

"The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?"

CHRIST BEFORE THE RULERS.

After this they led Him before the Sanhedrim; Christ

is before the rulers of the Jews. There were seventy that belonged to that Sanhedrim. The law required that two witnesses must appear against a person on trial before he could be convicted. They secure false witnesses, who come in and swear falsely. Then the high priest asked Jesus what it was that those men witnessed against Him; but He said nothing. The high priest asked Him a second time, and said,

"Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

Jesus answered, "I am; and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest said, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?"

And the verdict came forth, "He is guilty of death!"

What a sentence! After a short trial He was pronounced guilty of death! You can see one of these soldiers strike Him with the palm of his hand. Another spits in His face. They not only struck Him, but they spit upon Him. They kept Him until morning.

While the trial is going on, Peter is out in the judgment-hall swearing that he never knew Him. They had all forsaken Him. Judas had already come back and thrown down the money which had been paid him for betraying innocent blood, and was soon on his way to hang himself.

"Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled: but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this Man? They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: that the saying

of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what death He should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence."

At this time the city was filled with strangers from all parts of the country. They had heard that the Galilean prophet had been brought before the Sanhedrim, that they had condemned Him, and that He was to die the cruel death of the Cross; and all they had to do was to get Pilate's consent and they would put Him out of the way. Pilate talked with Him, and then said,

"I find no fault in this Man. I will chastise Him, and let Him go."

But they shouted, "If you let Him go, you will not be Cæsar's friend, for He has stirred up the country from Galilee to here."

"Why," said Pilate, "is He a Galilean?"

And they told Pilate that He was from Nazareth. When he heard that, he was glad to get rid of the responsibility.

He said, "Then I will send Him to Herod."

There are a great many Roman soldiers keeping back the crowds in the streets, the same as our police on some great day. You can see these soldiers going before the crowd that have Jesus, clearing the streets. Herod was glad when Jesus was brought into his presence, for he hoped that He would perform some miracle to gratify his curiosity. We are told that Herod's men of war set Him at naught. They said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they came up, and

struck Him on the face. Let us make the scene real to-day! "He was bruised for our transgressions."

After they had mocked Him, they again dressed Him up in his own garments and brought Him before Pilate. You can see the crowd around the judgment-hall. They are ready to put Him to death.

"All classes of persons conspired to crucify Him. 'The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against Jehovah, and against His Christ.' The dissolute, blood-thirsty Herod: the crafty, worldly-minded Pilate; the idolatrous Gentiles, and the religious people of Israel—all united to condemn to death God's holy Child Jesus."

JESUS OR BARABBAS?

A new thought strikes Pilate now. He remembered that it was a custom among the Jews that on a certain day one prisoner was to be released to them, and go unpunished. So he said to the Jews,

"Which of these two prisoners shall I release, Jesus or Barabbas?"

When they found out what was going on, the enemies of Christ went through the crowd and asked that Barabbas might be released. "Which shall I release unto you, Jesus or Barabbas?"—Jesus who raised the dead, or Barabbas who took the lives of men, whose hands were dripping with the blood of his fellow men —no sooner was the question put to the crowd than they lifted up their voices, shouting,

"Barabbas! Barabbas!"

Then he said, "What shall I do with Jesus?"

And the cry rang through the streets, "Let Him be crucified!" But a few days before, the crowd were crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Then when the governor heard it, he turned and washed his hands, saying,

"I am innocent of the blood of this just person."

I never knew until lately what the Roman custom of scourging was. When I first read about it I could not help but weep, and ask Christ to forgive me for not having loved Him more. Let us imagine the scene when He is taken by the Roman soldiers to be scourged. The orders were to put forty stripes, one after another upon His bared back. Sometimes it took fifteen minutes, and the man died while being scourged. See Him stooping while the sins of the world are laid upon Him, and the whips come down upon His bare back, cutting clear through the skin and flesh to the bone. After they had scourged Him, instead of pouring oil into the wounds of Him who came to bind up the broken heart, and pour oil into its wounds—instead of doing this they dressed Him up again, and some cruel wretch reached out to Him a crown of thorns, which was placed upon His brow. The Queen of England wears a crown of gold, filled with diamonds and precious stones, worth millions; but when they came to crown the Prince of Heaven, they gave Him a crown of thorns, and placed it upon His brow; and in His hand they put a reed for a sceptre.

"And the soldiers led Him away into the hall, called Prætorium; and they called together the whole band. And they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about His head, and began to salute Him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and bowing their knees worshipped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put his own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross."

ON THE WAY TO CALVARY.

Now you might have seen at one of the gates of the city a great crowd bursting through. There are

two thieves being brought for execution. Between the two thieves is the Son of God, walking through the streets of Jerusalem. And He carried a cross. Ladies wear small crosses made of gold, and wood, and stone, around their necks; but the cross that the Son of God carried was a heavy tree, made into a cross. I can see Him reeling and staggering under it. Undoubtedly He had lost so much blood that He was too faint to carry it; and before they got to the place, it well nigh crushed Him to the earth. And the crowd hooting, "Away with Him! away with Him!"—a pestilent fellow, as they called Him.

They arrived at Calvary a little before nine. Then they took the Son of God, and laid Him out upon the cross. I can see them binding His wrists to the arms of the cross. After they had got Him bound, up came a soldier with hammer and nails. He put one nail into the palm of His hand, and down came the hammer without mercy, driving it down through the bone and flesh, and into the wood; and then the other hand. Then they brought a long nail for His feet, and the soldiers gathered round the cross and lifted it up, and the whole weight of the Son of God came upon those nails in His hands and feet.

You who say you see no beauty in Christ that you should desire Him, come with me and look at those wounds! Remember that that crown of thorns was laid upon His brow by a mocking world. Look at Him as He hangs there, and at the people who pass by deriding Him! There are the two thieves that reviled Him, and the one that said, "Save us, and save Thyself, if Thou be the Son of God."

ON THE CROSS.

But hark! Christ has not spoken since He uttered those words of comfort to the daughters of Jerusalem; but at last there comes a cry from the cross. What is it? Is it a cry to God to take Him down from the

cross? Is it a cry of vengeance? or is He calling fire down on them? No! It is "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" Was there ever such love as that? While they were crucifying Him, He was lifting His heart to God in prayer. His heart seemed to be breaking for those sinners. How He wanted to take them in His arms! How He wanted to forgive them!

At last He cried, "I thirst!" Instead of giving Him a draught of water from one of His own springs, they gave Him a draught of gall mixed with vinegar. It was about the only thing He ever asked of the world, and you see how they treated His request.

There He hung! You can see those soldiers casting lots for His garments, as they crowd around the foot of the cross. While they were casting lots, the crowd would mock and deride Him, and make all manner of sport of Him. He only cried,

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!"

But now He cries, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" We have just seen what He suffered physically; but His mental sufferings were too deep for any mortal man to understand. He was dying in the sinner's stead, with the sins of the world upon His head. A righteous God could not look upon sin, even when borne by the eternal Substitute; and He hid his face from Him. Earth had cast Him out, man had mocked and rejected Him; His own disciples had forsaken Him and fled; and now that God would not look upon Him, it well nigh broke our Saviour's heart, and in the bitter anguish of His soul, He cried,

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Right in the midst of the darkness and gloom there came a voice from one of those thieves. It flashed into his soul as he hung there, "This must be more than man; this must be the true Messiah!" He cried out, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy

Kingdom!" We are anxious to get the last word or act of our dying friends. Here was the last act of Jesus. He snatched the thief from the jaws of death, saying,

"This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Again He spoke. What was it? "It is finished!" was His cry. Salvation was wrought out, atonement was made. His blood had been shed; His life had been given. Undoubtedly, if we could, we would have seen legions of devils hovering around the cross. The dark clouds of death and hell came surging up against the bosom of the Son of God, and He drove them back, as you have seen the waves come gathering up and surging against the rock, then receding, and then returning. The billows went over Him. He was conquering death, and Satan, and the world, in those last moments. He was treading the wine-press alone.

"It is finished!" Perhaps no one who heard it knew what it meant. But the angels in heaven knew. I can imagine the bells of heaven ringing out, and angels singing,

"The God-man is dead! Full restitution has opened the way back into Paradise, and all man has to do is to look and live!"

After He cried, "It is finished!" He bowed His head, commended His spirit to God, and gave up the ghost. Do you tell me you see no reason why you should love such a Saviour? Have you no desire to receive Him, and become His?

The following incident, related in a Christian paper, touched my heart very deeply:

Not a long while since, a prominent physician of Denver, Colorado, was called to attend a patient in the last stages of what appeared to be consumption, but which, upon examination proved to be simply a wearing away of life—a decay of the energies of mind and body. Although well supplied with money, the stranger was seemingly without friends or relatives.

He wrote no letters, and received none. An alien to the tenderness and charities which sanctify the affections, he seemed to be drifting out of the world, in which, for him, all the flowers of the heart had perished—a bleak and desolate old man, hastening out of the sunshine into the winter of the grave. After making a thorough examination of the case, the doctor told him that although he could find no organized disease, yet he was dying.

"I know it," replied the patient.

"But have you no idea of what brought you to this plight?" inquired the interested man of science.

"It is curious. You have heard a great deal about cases like mine—more as an exaggeration of the fancy than as an actual occurrence; but strange as it may appear, I am dying, as you say—of a broken heart."

"You surprise me!"

"Yes, I surprise myself. I did not come to your health-giving climate as others do, in search of a longer lease of life, but to die in peace, and alone."

"But have you no friends?" asked the doctor.

"None that I can claim. My past is sealed with the shadow of a crime, and over my nameless grave not even a memory must hover. I am already dead to all who ever knew my name!"

"You say you are a criminal?" pursued the doctor.

"No, I am none. But I assume the stigma to shield another."

"And that other?"

"Was my son."

"What was the nature of the crime?"

The physician's curiosity had got the better of his prudence. The shadows of twilight were falling around them. Through the open window streamed the soft brilliance of the dying day. Clouds of amethyst and purple floated lazily on the far-off hill. But in the chamber where the fevered breath was drawn quick and short, there was a hushed stillness which seemed in keeping with ghostly shadows.

"It was murder."

"And was fixed on you?"

"On me. I assumed it, and then escaped—not to evade the vengeance of the law, but to spare to him I loved the stigma of a felon's death."

"How long ago was this?"

"Twelve years."

"And you have been a wanderer ever since?"

"Ever since."

The feeble pulse was fluttering, the shattered form was growing rigid momentarily.

"Will you tell me no more?" whispered the physician.

"It is all I have to tell!"

The next instant the man was dead. He had kept his secret, and sacrificed his life in keeping it.

What should we think of that son, if we knew that he did not cherish and treasure as his dearest possession the memory of this loving self-sacrificing father? Could we imagine such base and heartless ingratitude? Surely not. Yet the sacrifice that father made on behalf of his boy was as the dust in the balance compared with the life of humiliation, of pain, and sorrow, and shame, voluntarily chosen and endured by our blessed Lord; with His mental anguish and bloody sweat in the garden; with His bodily sufferings and brutal treatment on the cruel cross; with the unspeakable burden of human sin that was laid upon Him, and that He gladly bore, that He might redeem a lost rebellious world.

Shall we render Him no return? Shall we banish such love from our hearts? Shall He not see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, as He lives in the deepest heart's affection of those whom He loved, and suffered, and died to save? Oh, the height and the depth of our ingratitude and infamy if we scorn the love of such a Saviour, and if we exalt Him not to his rightful place, as King in our hearts and lives! God

forbid that one soul who has ever heard the story of the Cross should be guilty of these things.

Thank God He is not now on the cross, or in the tomb. He has risen, and now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, where He waits to bless His believing people, and at last to receive them to His presence and glory.

TAKING GOD'S WAY.

I WISH to call your attention to a man rather than to a text; to one who was a great man in his own country, and very honorable; one whom the king delighted to honor. He stood high in position. He was captain of the host of the king of Syria; but he was a leper, and that threw a blight over his whole life.

There was no physician to help him in Syria. None of the eminent doctors in Damascus could do him any good. Neither could any in Jerusalem. There was no balm in Gilead. If he was to get rid of the leprosy, the power must come from on high. It must be some one unknown to Naaman, for he did not know God.

THE LITTLE MISSIONARY.

But I will tell you what they had in Syria—they had one of God's children there, and she was a little girl, a simple captive maid. Naaman knew nothing about her, though she was one of his household, this little Israelite.

I can imagine her one day as she said to Mrs. Naaman, her mistress, that there was a prophet in her country that could cure her master of his leprosy.

"Would to God," the maid said, "my lord were with the prophet in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

There's faith for you!

"Why," says the mistress, "what are you talking about? Did you ever hear of anybody being cured of leprosy?"

"Ah," said the girl, "it is true, I can assure you; we have got prophets down there that can cure anyone."

At last some one told the king what the little maid of Israel had said. Now Naaman stood high in the king's favor, for he had recently won a great victory.

He was called a lord, perhaps he was a prince, a sort of Syrian Prince Bismarck, who stood near the throne. So the king said,

"You had better go down to Samaria, and see if there is anything in it. I will give you letters of introduction to the king of Israel."

MONEY WILL NOT BUY SALVATION.

Yes, he would give Naaman letters of introduction to the king. That's just man's idea. The notion was that if anybody could help him, it was the king, and that the king had power both with God and man. Oh, my friends, it is a good deal better to know a man that knows God! A man acquainted with God has more power than any earthly potentate. Gold can't do everything.

Away goes Naaman down to Samaria with his kingly introduction, and he takes with him a lot of gold and silver. That is man's idea again; he is going to pay for a great doctor, and he takes about half a million dollars, as far as I can make it out, to pay for the doctor's bill. There are a good many men who would willingly pay that sum if with it they could buy the favor of God, and get rid of the curse of sin. Yes, if money could do it, how many would buy salvation! But, thank God, it is not in the market for sale. You must buy it at God's price, and that is "without money and without price." Naaman found that out.

And now, my dear friends, did you ever ask yourselves, Which is the worst—the leprosy of sin, or the leprosy of the body? For my own part, I would a thousand times sooner have the leprosy of the body eating my eyes out, and my feet and arms, I would rather be loathsome in the sight of my fellow-men, than die with the leprosy of sin in my soul, and be damned. Oh, how it has pulled men down! The leprosy of the body is bad, but the leprosy of sin is a thousand times worse. It has cast angels out of heaven, it has ruined

the best and strongest men that ever lived in the world. Oh, how it has pulled men down! The leprosy of the body could not do that.

But to proceed. There is one thing about Naaman that I like, and that is

HIS EARNESTNESS OF PURPOSE.

He was thoroughly in earnest. He was quite willing to go one hundred and fifty miles, and to take the advice of this little maid. A good many people say,

"Oh, I don't like such and such a minister; I should like to know where he comes from, and what he has done, and whether any bishop has laid his hands on his head."

My dear friends, never mind the minister, it is the message you want. If some one were to send me a telegraph message, and the news were important, I shouldn't stop to ask about the messenger who brought it. I should want to read the news. I should look at the message, and not at the boy who brought it.

And so it is with God's message. The good news is everything, the minister nothing. The Syrians looked down with contempt on the Israelites, and yet this great man was willing to take the good news at the hands of this little maiden, and listen to the words that fell from her lips. If I got lost in London, I should be willing to ask anybody which way to go, even if it were only a shoeblack. It is the way I want, not the person who directs me.

But there was one drawback in Naaman's case. Though he was willing to take the advice of the little girl, he was not willing to take the remedy.

THE STUMBLING-BLOCK OF PRIDE

stood in his way. The remedy the prophet offered him was a terrible blow to his pride.

I have no doubt he expected a grand reception from

the king of Israel, to whom he brought letters of introduction. He had been victorious on many a field of battle, and held high rank in the army; perhaps we may call him Major-General Naaman of Syria, or he might have been higher in rank even than that; and bearing with him kingly credentials, he expected no doubt a distinguished reception. But instead of the king rushing out to meet him, he, when he heard of Naaman's arrival, and his object, simply rent his mantle, and said,

"Am I God, to kill and to make alive?"

But at last the king bethinks himself of Elisha the prophet, and he says,

"There is a subject in my kingdom who may be able to help you and cure your leprosy."

And I can imagine Naaman's pride reasoning thus: "Surely the prophet will feel very much exalted and flattered that I, the great Syrian general, should come and call upon him."

And so, probably, full of those proud thoughts, he drives up to the prophet's humble dwelling with his chariot, four-in-hand, and his splendid retinue. As nobody seemed to be coming out to greet him, he sent in his message:

"Tell the prophet Major-General Naaman of Syria has arrived, and wishes to see him."

Elisha takes it very coolly. He does not come out to see him, but as soon as he learns his errand he sends his servant to tell him to dip seven times in the river Jordan, and he shall be clean.

Now that was a terrible blow to his pride! I can imagine him saying to his servant,

"What did you say? Did I understand you aright? Dip seven times in Jordan! Why we call the river Jordan a *ditch* in our country."

But the only answer he got was, "The prophet says, Go and dip seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall become like the flesh of a little child."

I can fancy Naaman's indignation as he asks, "Are

not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?"

So he turned and went away in a rage.

The fact was, the Jordan never had any great reputation as a river. It flowed into the Dead Sea, and that sea never had a harbor to it, and its banks were not half so beautiful as those of the rivers of Damascus; for Damascus was one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It is said that when Mahomet beheld it he turned his head aside for fear it should divert his thoughts from heaven.

Naaman turned away in a rage.

"Ah," he said, "here am I, a great conqueror, a successful general on the battle-field, holding the very highest rank in the army, and yet this prophet does not even come out to meet me; he simply sends a message! Why, I thought he would surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leprosy."

"I THOUGHT."

There it is! I hardly ever knew a man yet who, when talked to about his sins, didn't say,

"Yes, but I *thought* so and so."

"Mr. Moody," they say, "I will tell you what *I think;* I will tell you *my opinion.*"

In the 55th chapter of Isaiah it says, "God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways." And so it was with Naaman. In the first place he thought a good big doctor's fee would do it all, and settle everything up. And besides that there was another thing he thought: he thought going to the king with his letters of introduction would do it. Yes, those were Naaman's first thoughts.

"I thought." Exactly so. He turned away in rage and disappointment. He thought the prophet would have come out to him very humble and very subserv-

ient, and bid him do some great things. Instead of that Elisha, who was very likely busy writing, did not even come to the door or the window; he merely sent out the message,

"Tell him to dip seven times in the Jordan."

And away went Naaman, saying, *"I thought, I thought, I thought."* I have heard that tale so often that I am tired of it. I will tell you just what I think about it, and what I advise you to do—"Give it up," and take God's words, God's thoughts, God's ways. I never yet knew a man converted just in the time and manner he expected to be. I have heard people say, "Well, if ever I am converted, it won't be in a Methodist church; you won't catch me there." Now I never knew a man say that but, at last, if converted at all, it was in a Methodist church. A man to be converted has to give up his will, his ways, and his thoughts. God leads him in quite a contrary direction.

And so Naaman, after his anger had abated and cooled down a little, took a second thought, which proved the best, although his pride had been so dreadfully humbled.

THE SIMPLE REMEDY.

Whilst Naaman was thus wavering in his mind, and thinking on what was best to be done, one of his servants drew near and made a very sensible remark:

"My lord, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?"

Yes, there is a great deal of truth in that. If Elisha had said to him, "Go back to Syria on your hands and knees," he would most likely have done it. If he had said, "Go back all the way on one foot," he would have tried to do it. Or if he had said, "Give ten thousand pieces of gold for the medicine I shall offer thee, and thou shalt be cleansed," no doubt he would have done it. But to tell him merely to dip in

the river Jordan seven times, why it seemed absurd on the face of it! But this servant suggested to him that he had better go down to the Jordan and try the remedy as it was a very simple one.

I can fancy Naaman still reluctant to believe in it, saying,

"Why, if there is such cleansing power in the waters of Jordan, would not every leper in Israel go down and dip in them, and be healed?"

"Well, but you know," urges the servant, "Now that you have come a hundred and fifty miles, don't you think you had better do what he tells you? After all you can but try it; and he sends word distinctly, my lord, that your flesh shall come again as that of a little child."

So Naaman accepts this word in season. His anger is cooling down; he has got over the first flush of his indignation, and he says he might as well try it. That was the starting-point of his faith, although still he thought it a foolish thing, and could not bring himself to believe that the result would be what the prophet had said.

How many men have told me right to my face they did not believe a man could be saved by simply obeying God. Faith, they thought, was not enough, they must do something. They will have it that there must be a little asking and reasoning, and striving, and wrestling with God, before they can get the blessing

FOOLISH QUESTIONS.

I recollect once praying with a man for his conversion, and just when I thought conviction had been brought home to him, he turned round, and said,

"Who do you think Melchisedek was, Mr. Moody?"

And then I have had others who, when I have been praying with them that their sins might be taken away, would turn round, and ask me,

"Do you believe in infant baptism, Mr. Moody?"

My friends, you need not trouble yourselves about those questions, but if you wish to be saved, just do as the Bible tells you.

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER.

At last Naaman's will was conquered, subdued, and broken; and he had faith, and he surrendered. When General Grant was besieging a town which was the stronghold of the southern Confederacy, some of the officers sent word that they would leave the city if he would let them go with their men. But General Grant sent word,

"No, nothing but an unconditional surrender!"

Then they sent word that they would go if he would let them take their flag with them. But the answer was,

"No, an unconditional surrender."

At last the beleaguered walls were broken down, and the city entered, and then the enemy made a complete and unconditional surrender. It was so with Naaman. He got to that point when he was willing to obey, and the Scripture tells us, "To obey is better than sacrifice."

So he goes down to the river and takes the first dip. As he comes up, I can imagine him looking at himself, and saying to his servant,

"There, there I am, no better than I was when I went in. If one-seventh of the leprosy was gone, I should be content."

Well, down he goes a second time, and he comes up puffing and blowing as much a leper as ever; and so he goes down again and again, the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth time, with the same result, as much a leper as ever. And the people standing on the banks of the river probably said, as they certainly would in our day,

"Why that man has gone clean out of his mind!"

So when he comes up the sixth time, he looks at himself, and says,

"Ah, no better! What a fool I have made of myself. How they will laugh at me! I wouldn't have the generals and aristocracy of Damascus know that I have been dipping in this way in Jordan for all the world. However, as I have gone so far, I'll make the seventh plunge."

He has not altogether lost faith, and down he goes the seventh time, and comes up again. He looks at himself and shouts aloud for joy.

"Lo, I am well! My leprosy is all gone, all gone! My flesh has come again as that of a little child! I never knew such a thing. I never felt so happy in all my life. I thought I was a great and a happy man when I accomplished that victory; but, thank God, I am the happiest man alive!"

So he comes up out of Jordan and puts on his clothes, and goes back to the prophet, and wants to pay him. That's just the old story, Naaman wants to give money for his cure. How many people want to do the same nowadays! Why, it would have spoiled the story of grace if the prophet had taken anything. You may give a thank-offering to God's cause, not to purchase salvation, but because you are saved. The prophet Elisha refused to take anything, and I can imagine no one felt more rejoiced than he did.

So Naaman starts back to Damascus a very different man than he was when he left it. The dark cloud has gone from his mind: he is no longer a leper, in fear of dying from a loathsome disease. He lost the leprosy in Jordan when he did what the man of God told him; and if you obey the voice of God, even while I am speaking to you, the burden of your sins will fall from off you, and you shall be cleansed. It is all done by the power of faith.

You may be sure when he got home there was no small stir in Naaman's house. I can just see his wife,

Mrs. Naaman, when he gets back. She has been watching and looking out of the window for him with a great burden on her heart. And when she asks him, "Well, husband, how is it?" I can see the tears running down his cheeks as he says, "Thank God, I am well!" They embrace each other, and pour out mutual expressions of rejoicing and gladness; and the servants are just as glad as their master and mistress, as they have been waiting eagerly for the news; and there never was a happier household than Naaman's now that he has got rid of the leprosy. And so, my friends, it will be with your own households if you will only get rid of the leprosy of sin to-day. Not only will there be joy in your own hearts and at home, but there will also be joy among the angels in heaven.

Another thought is suggested to us by this history of Naaman in the 15th verse of the chapter; and which shows what Naaman's faith led him to believe. "And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant." I want particularly to call your attention to the words,

"I KNOW."

There is no hesitation about it, no qualifying the expression. Naaman doesn't now say, "I think"; no, he says, "*I know* there is a God who has power to forgive sins and to cleanse the leprosy."

Then there is another thought. Naaman left only one thing in Samaria, and that was his sin, his leprosy. The only thing God wishes you to leave with Him is your sin; and yet it is the only thing you seem not to care about giving up.

"Oh," you say, "I love it, it is so delightful, I can't give it up; I know God wants it, that He may make me clean. But I can't give it up."

Why, what downright madness it is for you to love leprosy; and yet that is your condition!

"Ah, but," says someone, "I don't believe in sudden conversions."

Don't you? Well, how long did it take Naaman to be cured? The seventh time he went down, away went the leprosy! Read the great conversions recorded in the Bible—Saul of Tarsus, Zacchæus, and a host of others; how long did it take the Lord to bring them about? They were effected in a minute. We are born in iniquity, shapen in it, dead in trespasses and sin; but when spiritual life comes it comes in a moment, and we are freed both from sin and death.

One day as I was walking down the street, I heard some people laughing and talking aloud, and one of them said,

"Well, there will be no difference, it will be all the same a hundred years hence."

The thought flashed across my mind, "Will there be no difference? Where will you be

A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE?"

Young man, just ask yourself the question, "Where shall I be?" Some of you who are getting on in years may be in eternity ten years hence. Where will you be, on the left or the right hand of God? I cannot tell your feelings, but I can my own.

A hundred years hence all this vast audience will be gone. Some will probably be gone in less than a week, in less than a month or a year, and at the best we shall all be gone in a few more years. I ask you once again, "Where will you spend eternity? Where will you be a hundred years hence?"

THE CONVERTED NOBLEMAN.

I heard of a man who came a few years ago from

the continent, and brought letters with him to eminent physicians from the emperor who said,

"This man is a personal friend of mine, and we are afraid he is going to lose his reason; do all you can for him."

The doctor asked him if he had lost any dear friend in his own country, or any position of importance, or what it was that was weighing on his mind. And the young man said,

"No, but my father and grandfather and myself were brought up infidels, and for the last two or three years this thought has been haunting me, 'Where shall I spend eternity?' The thought of it follows me day and night."

The doctor said, "You have come to the wrong physician, but I will tell you of one who can cure you"; and he told him of Christ, and read to him the 53d chapter of Isaiah, "With His stripes we are healed."

The young man said, "Doctor, do you believe that?"

The doctor told him that he did, and prayed and wrestled with him, and at last the clear light of Calvary shone on his soul, and later he was writing to this doctor as only one Christian can to another. He had settled the question in his own mind at last where he would spend eternity; and I ask you sinners to settle it before you leave this hall to-night. It is for you to decide. Shall it be with the saints, and martyrs, and prophets, or in the dark caverns of hell, amidst blackness and darkness for ever? Make haste to be wise; for "how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"

DECIDE NOW.

At our church in Chicago I was closing the meeting one day, when a young soldier got up and entreated the people to decide for Christ at once. He said he had just come from a dark scene. A comrade of his, who had enlisted with him, had a father who was always entreating him to become a Christian, and in

reply he always said he would when the war was over. At last he was wounded, and was put into the hospital, but he got worse and was gradually sinking. One day a few hours before he died, a letter came from his sister, but he was too bad to read it. Oh, it was such an earnest letter! The comrade read it to him, but he did not seem to understand it, he was so weak, till it came to the last sentence, which said,

"Oh, my dear brother, when you get this letter, will you not accept your sister's Saviour?"

The dying man sprang up from his cot, and said, "What do you say? what do you say?" and then, falling back on his pillow, feebly exclaimed, *"It is too late! It is too late!"*

My dear friends, thank God it is not *too late* for you to-day. The Master is still calling you. Let every one of us, young or old, rich and poor, come to Christ at once, and He will cleanse us of the leprosy of sin, and make us clean and white by His own precious blood!

"SON, REMEMBER."

Luke 16: 25.

In another place of the Scripture we read of the "worm that dieth not" and the "fire that is not quenched." I believe the "worm" spoken of is memory. I believe that is what is going to make hell so terrible to those that have lived in a Gospel land, is to think what they might have been, to think how they might have spent eternity in that world of light.

Now we read in this portion of Scripture that this rich man is in another world. His soul has left the body, he has gone beyond time, and he is now in another world. Some people say that when we preach about hell it is only to terrify the people—only to alarm them. Now I am no alarmist, and if I could terrify any one, and try to scare them into the kingdom of God, I would not. But at the same time, if I am to be a messenger for God, I must tell the whole message—I must not keep back any part of the Word of God. The same Christ that tells us of heaven with all its glories tells us of hell with all its horrors; and no one will accuse Christ of drawing this picture to terrify people, or to alarm them, if it were not true.

This picture is one that He has drawn Himself. I have read some sermons about hell, but I never read one more terrible than this one. I have never seen a picture drawn more fearful than this one that is drawn here, of a rich man "clothed in purple and fine linen," and who "fared sumptuously every day" while he was in this world; but we catch a glimpse of him in another world, and we find him there lifting up his voice in hell, and crying in torment.

Some tell us there is no hell and some that there is no heaven. If I had to give up one, I would have to give up the other. The same Bible that tells us of heaven tells us of hell. The same Saviour that came

down from heaven to tell us about heaven, tells us about hell. He speaks about our escaping the damnation of hell, and there is no one that has lived since that could tell us as much about it as Himself. If there is no hell, let us burn our Bibles. Why spend so much time studying the Bible? Why spend so much time and so much money in building churches? Let us turn our churches into places of commerce or of amusement. Let us eat and drink and be merry, for we will soon be gone if there is no hereafter. Let us build a monument for Paine and Voltaire. Let us build a tomb over Christianity, and shout over it,

"There is no hell to receive us, there is no God to condemn sin; there is no heaven, there is no hereafter!"

Let us be in earnest. If there *is* a heaven and a hell, then let us act as God would have us act. God was in earnest when He gave Christ to die for us. Christ was in earnest when He went to Calvary and suffered that terrible death—it was to save us from that terrible hell. If I believed there was no hell, you would not find me going from town to town, spending day and night preaching and proclaiming the Gospel, and urging men to escape the damnation of hell. I would take things easy.

Oh, my friends, I cannot but believe it! And if there is any one here in doubt about it, why not be honest? If you believe you have a Creator, why not ask Him to give you light about the future? There was a time when I did not believe it; but God revealed it to me. It is a matter of revelation. It is Satan that is telling us there is no hereafter and no hell, because the Word of God teaches it so plainly. And if there is a hell, we had better find it out before we get there; it is a good deal better for us to find it out here than to be laughing and joking about it. It makes me feel very sad to hear men speaking so flippantly about hell, and making jokes about it. God is not to be trifled with. Think of this man in that lost world crying for one drop of water, and then asking that Abraham might

send one to comfort him; but there was a gulf fixed that no man could cross! God has fixed that gulf.

THE TIME OF SEPARATION.

The time is coming when there will be a separation. The time is coming when that praying wife and that godless, Christless husband shall be separated. The time is coming when that godly, sainted mother will be lifted up to heaven, and that scorning, infidel son will be cast down to hell unless he is wise and accepts of salvation.

Now the thought I want to bring out is just this—that there is

MEMORY IN HELL.

What did Abraham say to this man? "Son, remember." Oh, may this text be engraved on your heart!

"Son, remember." God wants you to wake up and remember before it is too late. It is a good deal better for a man to be wise, and stop and think while he has the privilege of changing his mind, if he is wrong, than it is to go on like a madman and be cast into the prison-house of hell. Then he will have to think; yes, memory will be keen then to act, but it will be too late to make any change.

I have been twice at the point of death. I was drowning once, and just as I was going down the third time I was rescued. In the twinkling of an eye my whole life came flashing across my mind. I cannot tell you how it was. I cannot tell you how a whole life can be crowded into a second of time; but everything I had done from my earliest childhood—it all came flashing across my mind. And I believe, that when God touches the secret spring of memory, every one of our sins will come back, and if they have not been blotted out by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, they will haunt us as eternal ages roll on. We talk about our

forgetting, but we cannot forget if God says, "Remember!" We talk about the recording angel keeping the record of our life. I have an idea that when we get to heaven or into eternity, we will find that recording angel has been ourselves. God will make every one of us keep our own record. These memories will keep the record, and when God shall say, "Son, remember," it will all flash across our mind. It won't be God who will condemn us, it will be ourselves. We shall condemn ourselves, and we shall stand before God speechless.

There is a man in prison. He has been there five years. Ask that man what makes the prison so terrible to him. Ask him if it is the walls and the iron gates—ask him if it is his hard work, and he will tell you *no;* he will tell you what makes the prison so terrible to him is *memory.* And I have an idea that if we got down into the lost world, we would find that is what makes hell so terrible—the remembrance that they once heard the Gospel, that they once had Christ offered to them, that they once had the privilege of being saved, but they made light of the Gospel, they neglected salvation, they rejected the offer of mercy, and now if they would they could not.

A MISSIONARY SPIRIT IN HELL.

We find this rich man had a desire to get out of that place of torment. He had a missionary spirit when he got there, for he said,

"Send some one to my father's house, and warn my five brethren. Oh, send some one to tell them not to come to this place of torment!"

Yes, it would have been better if he had had a missionary spirit before he had got there! It would be better for you that you should wake up and come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and go to work to save your friends while you are on praying ground, and in this

world. Your missionary spirit won't help you when you are in hell; it won't help you when you are in the lost world. Yes, memory, memory! "Son, remember."

CAIN'S MEMORY.

If Cain is in that lost world to-night, no doubt he can remember the pleading of his brother Abel. He can remember how he looked when he smote him—he can hear that piercing cry to-night, he has not forgotten it. All these long years Cain remembers what he might have been, how he despised the God of grace, and how he lost his soul. Thousands of years have rolled away, but still Cain has to think; he cannot help but think.

I have no doubt but that Judas remembers how Christ preached that sermon he heard on the mountain, how Christ looked when He wept over Jerusalem, and he can see those tears to-night, he can hear that voice as He cried over Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He hears that cry; he can see that kind, mild, gentle look of the Son of God. He can hear that voice as Christ said to him in Gethsemane,

"Betrayest thou the Master with a kiss?"

Yes, memory is at work. His memory woke up before he died, when he went out and destroyed himself, taking his remorse and despair with him into the lost world.

NOAH'S CONTEMPORARIES.

Do you think those antediluvians have forgotten how Noah pleaded with them? They laughed at the ark. I have no doubt, if you had gone and preached to them a week before the flood, and told them that there was a hell, not one would have believed it. If you had told

them that there was to be a deluge, and that God was going to sweep them away from the earth, they would not have believed it. But did it change the fact? Did not the flood come and take them all away?

You might have gone to Sodom and told the Sodomites that God was going to destroy Sodom, and they would have laughed at you, just as men make light of and laugh at hell. But did it change the fact? Did not God destroy the cities of the plain?

So with Jerusalem. Christ told how destruction would come upon it, and they mocked at Him and crucified Him. But look down the stream of time! In forty short years Titus came up against that city and besieged it, and there were a million that perished within it. Yes, those Jerusalem sinners can remember in the lost world to-night how Christ wept over Jerusalem, how He walked their streets, how He went into the temple and preached, and how He pleaded with them to escape for their life, and to flee the damnation of hell; but they mocked on, they laughed on, they made light until it was too late, and they are gone now.

Oh, may God wake up this audience, and may every man and woman here before it is too late escape for their lives! "How shall we escape," says the apostle, "if we neglect so great salvation?"

NO BIBLE IN THE LOST WORLD.

There will be no Bible in the lost world to be a lamp to your feet and a light to your path, to guide you to eternal mansions. You make light of the Bible now; you laugh at its teachings; but bear in mind, there will be no Bible in the lost world. You have a Bible here. Had you not better take it now, had you not better read it, had you not better believe it?

I have not any doubt if a man had gone to that rich man a week before he was taken away he would have told you he did not believe in the Bible, he did not believe in a place of torment, he did not believe a

word of it. But did that change the fact? He found it out when it was too late. And there was no Bible there to help him out.

There was no minister there to go and preach to him. Yes, bear in mind, if you get into that lost world, there will be no minister to pray for you, no earnest sermons preached there; it will be too late then.

There will be no Sabbath school teacher there. I am speaking now to some young people that are in the Sabbath school, and who have praying teachers. Bear in mind, you will have no teacher there to weep over you, to pray for you, to plead with you to come to Christ.

I may be speaking to some young man who has had some friend come and put his hand upon his shoulder, and ask him to come to Christ. You made light of that, young man. You laughed at him, and you cavilled at him. Bear in mind, there will be no friend to come and put his hand upon your shoulder, and speak loving words to you there. "Son, remember." If you have friends that are anxious for your soul's salvation here, and they are pleading for you, treat them kindly; you will not have them in that lost world. Do not laugh at them; it is God that sent the loving message to you.

I may be speaking to some young man who has a godly, praying mother. You are hasting to ruin, and breaking a mother's heart. Oh, young man, make that mother's heart glad to-night by telling her you have accepted her God as your God, her Saviour as your Saviour, that you are not going down to death and ruin, but that you will meet her in glory. Oh, may God meet every soul in this assembly, and may every eye and heart be opened to receive the truth!

You come here to-night to hear Mr. Sankey sing, "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By"; but bear in mind, you will not hear that song in the lost world; or, if you do, it will not be true—He does not pass that way. To-night He is passing by! I beg of you, do not make light of the Lord Jesus and His offer of mercy. He

comes to save you from a terrible hell. He wants to redeem every soul here to-night.

And now while I am speaking, hundreds and thousands of Christians are lifting up their hearts silently to God for your salvation. May God answer their prayers, and may there be many to-night that shall be saved. Now you have a golden opportunity. Jesus is truly passing this way. Why do you doubt that He has been in our midst to-night? There has not been a night that a great many have not gone into the inquiry-room and have taken us by the hand, and said "I have accepted Christ, I have found Him to-night," showing that the Lord Jesus Christ is in our midst. He is saving some; why should not He save you? And while He is passing, and so many are believing on Him, why won't you receive Him? My friends, God does not want you to perish, He wants you to be saved. God does not want a soul in this vast assembly to be lost, He wants every one to be in glory. And if you will accept His Son as a gift from Him, if you will accept the Lord Jesus, you can be saved.

AN UNBELIEVING MOTHER.

I was standing by the inquiry-room door in another place a few months ago, and I saw a lady weeping. I spoke to her; but a woman seized her by the hand and pushed her away from me. I said,

"What is the trouble?"

"Why," she said, "this is my daughter, and I don't want her to be associated with Christians; I hate Christians."

I tried to reason with that mother, but she pulled her daughter away weeping, the daughter pleading with the mother to stay.

Is there such a mother here to-night? May God have mercy upon you! It is a thousand times better for your daughters and your children to be associated with Christians than it is to have them go down to

death and be associated with fiends as eternal ages go on. All workers of iniquity shall be cast into the lake of fire, but those whose names are written in the book of life shall have a right to the tree of life, and shall walk the crystal pavement of heaven. Oh, may God help you to be wise to-night, to flee from your old companions and associates, and lay hold of eternal life! Do not trifle with this great subject. Be wise, and accept salvation as it comes from God.

AN UNFILIAL SON.

I was once told of a father that had a son who had broken his mother's heart. After her death he went on from bad to worse. One night he was going out to spend it in vice, and the old man went to the door as the younger one was going out, and said,

"My son, I want to ask a favor of you to-night. You have not spent one night with me since your mother was buried, and I have been so lonesome without her and without you, and now I want to have you spend tonight with me. I want to have a talk with you about the future."

The young man said, "No, father, I do not want to stay; it is gloomy here at home."

"Won't you stay for my sake?"

The son said he would not.

At last the old man said, "If I cannot persuade you to stay, if you are determined to go down to ruin, and to break my heart as you have your mother's—for these gray hairs cannot stand it much longer—you shall not go without my making one more effort to save you."

He threw open the door, and laid himself upon the threshold, and said,

"If you go out to-night you must go over this old body of mine."

What did that young man do? Why, he leaped over the father, and on to ruin he went.

Now there is not a man or woman here who would not say that young man was an ungrateful wretch. Did you ever think that God has given His Son? Yes, He has laid Him (as it were) right across your path that you might not go down to hell; and if there is a soul in this assembly that goes to hell, you must go over the murdered body of God's Son, you must trample the blood of Christ under your feet. No sooner did the news reach heaven that Adam had fallen, than God came down and made a way of escape. God so loved the world that He gave Christ to die that you and I might live. Do not make light of that blessed Saviour. Do not sit here and have that scornful look upon your brow, but lift up your heart to God, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Receive the gift of God!

If the Spirit of God is striving with you, let me plead with you. Treat Him kindly. Bear in mind that God has said that His Spirit shall not always strive. There have been many, I believe, that have been awakened, and the Spirit of God has been striving with you; and now let me plead with you as a friend—just give yourself up to the leading of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God will lead us aright; He never makes any mistake. God has sent Him from heaven into this world to lead us out of darkness into light, and the Spirit is drawing you to Christ. Do not resist Him; do not reject Him. I do not ask you to think or to believe what I say; all I ask is, believe what God tells you; believe what the Spirit of God will reveal to you about Christ; and if the Spirit of God is striving with you, do not quench or resist Him, but to-night just open the door of your heart and let Him come in, and it will be a thousand times better for you in this life and in the life to come.

A few years ago I was about to close a meeting, and said,

"Are there any here that would like to have me remember them in prayer? I would like to have them arise!"

A man rose and when I saw him stand up, my heart leaped in me for joy. I had been anxious for him a long time. I went to him as soon as the meeting was over, and took him by the hand, and said,

"You are coming out for God, are you not?"

"I want to," he said, "and I have made up my mind to be a Christian, only there is one thing stands in my way.'

"What is that?" I said.

"Well," he said, "I lack moral courage. If he had been here to-night (naming a friend of his), I should not have risen; and I am afraid when he hears I have risen for prayer he will begin to laugh at me, and I won't have the moral courage to stand up for Christ."

I said, "If Christ is what He is represented in the Bible, He is worth standing up for; and if heaven is what we are told it is in the Bible, it is worth our living for." He said he lacked moral courage, and was trembling from head to foot. I thought he was just at the very threshold of heaven, and that one step more was going to take him in, and that he would take the step that night. I talked and prayed with him, and the Spirit seemed to be striving mightily with him, but he did not get light. Night after night he came, and the Spirit still strove with him; but just that one thing kept him—he lacked moral courage. At last the Spirit of God who had striven with him so mightily seemed to leave him, and there was no more striving. He left off coming to church, was off among his old companions, and would not meet me in the street—he was ashamed to do so.

About six months afterwards I got a message from him, and found him on what he thought his dying-bed. He wanted to know if there was any hope for him at the eleventh hour. I tried to tell him there was hope for any man that would accept Christ. I prayed with him, and day after day visited him.

Contrary to all expectations, he began to recover.

When he was convalescent, finding him one day sitting in front of his house, I sat by his side, and said,

"You will soon be well enough to come up to the church, and when you are, you will come up, and you are just going to confess Christ boldly, are not you?"

"Well," said he, "I promised God when I was on what we thought my dying-bed I would serve Him, and I made up my mind to be a Christian; but I am not going to be one just now. Next spring I am going over by Lake Michigan, and I am going to buy a farm, and settle down, and then I am going to be a Christian." "How dare you talk in that way!" I said. "How do you know you are going to live till next spring? Have you a lease of your life?" "I never was better than I am now," he said, "I am a little weak, but I will soon have my strength. I have a fresh lease of my life, and will be well for a good many years yet."

"It seems to me you are tempting God," and I pleaded with him to come out boldly.

"No," he said, "the fact is, I have not the courage to face my old companions, and I cannot serve God in Chicago." "If God has not grace enough to keep you in Chicago," I said, "He has not in Michigan."

I urged him then and there to surrender soul and body to the Lord Jesus, but the more I urged him the more irritated he got, till at last he said,

"Well, you need not trouble yourself any more about my soul; I will attend to that. If I am lost, it will be my own fault. I will take the risk."

A FEARFUL DEATH-BED.

I left him, and within a week I got a message from his wife. Going to the house, I met her at the door weeping. I said,

"What is the trouble?"

"Oh, sir, I have just had a council of physicians here, and they have all given my husband up to die; they say he cannot live."

"Does he want to see me?" I asked.

"No."

"Why did you send for me?"

"Oh," she said, "I cannot bear to see him die in this terrible state of mind."

"What is his state of mind?"

"He says that his damnation is sealed, and he will be in hell in a little while."

I went into the room, but he turned his head away.

"How is it with you?" I said.

Not a word! He was as silent as death. I spoke the second time, but he made no response. I looked him in the face, and called him by name, and said,

"Will you not tell me how it is with you?"

He turned, fixed that awful deathly look upon me, and, pointing to the stove, he said,

"My heart is as hard as the iron in that stove. It is too late! My damnation is sealed, and I shall be in hell in a little while."

"Don't talk so," I said, "you can be saved now if you will."

"Don't you mock me, I know better," he replied.

I talked with him, and quoted promise after promise, but he said not one was for him.

"Christ has come knocking at the door of my heart many a time, and the last time He came I promised to let Him in, and when I got well I turned away from Him again, and now I have to perish without Him."

I talked, but saw that I was doing no good, and so I threw myself on my knees.

"You can pray for my wife and my children," he said, "you need not pray for me. It is a waste of your time. It is too late!"

I tried to pray, but it seemed as if what he said was true—as if the heavens were as brass over me.

I rose and took his hand. It seemed to me as if I were bidding farewell to a friend that I never was to see again in time or in eternity.

He lingered till the sun went down. His wife told

me his end was terrible. All that he was heard to say were these fearful words, "The harvest is past the summer is ended, and I am not saved!" There he lay, and every little while he would take up the awful lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!" Just as the sun was sinking behind those western prairies he was going into the arms of death. As he was expiring, his wife noticed that his lips were quivering, he was trying to say something. She reached over her ear, and all she could hear was, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!" and the angels bore him to the judgment.

He lived a Christless life, he died a Christless death. We wrapped him in a Christless shroud and nailed him in a Christless coffin, and bore him to a Christless grave. Oh, how dark! oh, how sad!

I may be speaking to some one to-night, and the harvest may be passing with you, the summer may be ending—oh, be wise to-night and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour! Believe that He bore your sins in His own body on the cross, and be saved. May God's blessing rest upon us all, and may we meet in glory, is the prayer of my heart!

HEAVEN AND HOW TO GET THERE.

My subject on this occasion is heaven. Oh, what a subject it is! How full of meaning to us all! A subject that brims over with glories and joys, that savors of crowns, and harps, and everlasting life!

On this important matter how are we to gain reliable information? Simply by Scripture, as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Here, then, is our guide-book, our text-book—the Word of God. If I utter a syllable that is not justified by the Scriptures, don't believe me. The Bible is the only rule. Walk by it, and by it alone. May God grant that the eyes of our understanding may be opened, that we may learn something of that land above, that home He is preparing for them that love Him!

I say, then, that the Scriptures are our sole guide in seeking for any information about heaven. Take up the Word of God prayerfully and reverently, and the Holy Spirit will reveal unto us the things of God. But some don't care about investigating this subject; they don't think it is worth their while. They say, "We shall see it when we get there." Ah, if you had to spent an eternity in some particular place, you would be anxious enough to learn all you could about it—what kind of place it was, and what kind of company you would meet there!

Well, let us inquire, then,

(1) WHERE IS HEAVEN?

It is not down beneath, in the bowels of the earth; it is not on the earth, in some far away land yet unvisited by mortal man. No; we are constantly told

in Scripture that heaven is above; it is on high. It is thus represented in the Bible on occasions when God is spoken to, as, for instance, in Deut. 26:15: "Look *down* from Thy holy habitation." So we might turn over passage after passage to show this. Mark some of them, and refer to them: Deut. 30:12; Psalm 103:11, "High above the earth;" Psalm 139:8; Isaiah 63:15; Luke 24:51. The Bible represents heaven as being always above, and never below.

Again, when Jesus was leaving this world, He led His disciples out of the city over the Mount of Olives, where they had so often walked together, past the garden where He had suffered His terrible agony, and where that sad scene of treachery took place, out as far as Bethany, and there, after He had spoken His last loving words, and given His final commands, "He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." (Acts 1:9-11.) Ah, heaven is perhaps nearer than we imagine—up there, just beyond the azure blue, it may be!

When Jesus had ascended there, He looked back and saw His poor followers gazing up into heaven after Him, unable to reconcile themselves to the thought that they would never more see Him, walk with Him, or speak to Him on this earth. How His loving heart felt for them. He commanded two of His servants, the angels,

"Go down, and comfort My disciples: tell them not to mourn; for they shall see Me again."

Quick as lightning the two bright angels came on their errand of love, and whilst the disciples had scarcely yet made sure that they had really lost sight of Jesus, lo! "two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

They believed that heaven was above, on high. How could they believe otherwise? They had seen Him go

up; they had seen Him ascend from them higher and higher, a cloud received Him out of their sight.

(2) ITS INHABITANTS.

It is *the dwelling place of God,* whose glory fills the whole earth. He is there. His peculiar dwelling-place, His throne, His habitation is there. (2 Chron. 6:21.) King Solomon's prayer when the temple had been consecrated, and he was praying to God to hear prayer and bless His people, was, "Hear Thou from Thy dwelling-place, even from heaven." Isaiah 66:1: "The heaven is My throne." And this was quoted in Acts 7:49: "Heaven is My throne." Again in Psalm 123:1: "Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens." Again, Psalm 33:13, 14; and Psalm 11:4: "The Lord's throne is in heaven."

Surely that is a sweet thought. If I am to spend my eternity in heaven, I like to know and to be assured that my Father is there, and to feel that He is there ruler over all—that He is the first, the chiefest, the holiest, the highest in all high heaven, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." "I dwell in the heavens," says the Almighty God; and yet, "If My people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14.) Though He is high and mighty, yet "He dwells also with him who is of a humble and a contrite spirit."

Yes, that is one of His greatest and most wonderful characteristics—He is the hearer and answerer of prayer. As an instance of this, see Daniel 2:18, where there is a prayer that God would reveal to His servants, not only the interpretation of a dream, but even the dream itself. "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" No. In the very next verse we have the answer right back, as it were, by telegraph from

heaven, 19th verse: "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision."

The Scripture is full of such answers; every page of it encourages prayer. God will have us pray, and He will answer prayer. Surely we have all found out that in our experience; if not, it is our own fault. "The arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save." It is our own prayers that are shortened, and that are weak and faithless. Oh, let us "ask in faith, nothing wavering!" Some people are like the disciples in Jerusalem praying for the release of Peter: their prayers were answered, and Peter stood at the door, but they could not believe it; they said it must be his spirit. Oh, let us take God at His word! He says, "While they are yet speaking, I will answer." Is not that encouraging. He delights to hear our prayers; He will not weary with our often coming.

In the prayer which Christ taught His disciples, "Our Father which art in heaven." Think of that word "art." He is now, at the present moment, in heaven. It is no thing of the past—no old story. No; He is there now, making heaven bright with His presence, and glorious with the radiance of His majesty. He is there on high.

But who may use this prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven"? Examine its context. The disciples when alone with Jesus said, "Lord, teach us to pray." And this was the answer they got; they were taught this precious prayer: "In this manner pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven." It was taught by Jesus to His chosen disciples; then it is only for Christians. No man who is unconverted can, or has any right to, pray thus. Christ taught HIS DISCIPLES, not all men, not the multitude, to pray like this.

A man must be born again before he has any right to breathe this prayer. It is the second birth that makes us "sons of the living God." What right has any man living in sin and in open enmity with God

to lift up his voice and say, "Our, or my Father"? It is a lie, and nothing else, for him to say this. Such language is intended for God's own sanctified people, and no others.

"What shall I do then?" cries some poor lost sinner; "I want to be saved; I want to find Christ; I want to escape eternal judgment. What am I to do? I must pray."

Yes, poor sinner, poor lost one, you may pray; but yours at present is a very different prayer. It is this: "God be merciful to me a sinner"; "Lord, save me; I perish"; "Have mercy on me, thou Son of David." These are the prayers for you, sinner. If you cry to God, "He will hear." He hath promised, and "faithful is He that hath promised." He will bend a willing ear to the voice of your supplication, He will save you; and then, washed in the blood of the Lamb, made clean and holy through His merits, clothed in the white robe of His righteousness, then you can pray along with the rest of God's family, "Our Father which art in heaven." Yes, in heaven, and when we arrive there, we shall be in the presence of our Father.

STEPHEN'S GAZE INTO HEAVEN.

But, still further, read with me the account of Stephen in Acts 7:55, 56: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost (his eyes were opened), looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." He looked up —heaven is up—and looking up he saw what? he saw the heavens opened, and he saw the glory of God. His eyes were opened to behold celestial scenes. Heaven is not so far off after all! Just up there—it only needs the opening of our blind eyes to see it! It may be, yea, it is, very near to us all. And God is there, and God is here!

Stephen's eyes being opened, he saw the glory of God. And more—he saw even more with his enlightened eyes. Would that our eyes were thus opened to see the glories of the invisible world! What more did he see? He saw

JESUS STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.

Think of that! He was so filled with joy at the sight he forgot all about his cruel persecutors, and he cried out, and told the Jews what he beheld there: "I see Jesus." They were not thankful, nor filled with joy. No, no; they ran upon him with one accord, the devil making them stop their ears and shout with a loud voice, that they might not give heed to the glad news.

But to us who believe, who love Him, who look for His appearing, oh, what glorious tidings! Jesus is there, at the right hand of God. Ah, it is not so much the jasper walls; it is not the pearly gates, or the streets of pure gold, the sea of glass, the river of crystal, the seraphim and cherubim, but above all, and before all, it is the Lamb that is the light thereof! It is that which makes heaven our home. Christ is there. Jesus our elder Brother has gone before us, and is there now, preparing mansions for us, looking for us, expecting us. He is waiting to welcome home His own people.

Oh, it is sweet in any earthly place to have some one looking out for you, expecting you, longing for you! And that is what makes heaven so sweet, so dear to us. He is there who hath bought us, who hath redeemed us with His own precious blood, who hath given Himself a ransom for us.

Once I heard of a little sick child, whose mother was seriously ill; and so, in order that she might have quiet, and that the sick child might be no trouble to her, the little one was taken away to a friend's house, and placed in charge of a kind lady for a time. The mother grew worse, and at length died. The father said,

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"We'll not trouble the child about it; she is too young to remember her mother. Just let her remain where she is until the funeral is over."

This was done, and in a few days the little girl was brought back to the house. No mention was made of her mother, or of what had occurred; but no sooner was she taken to the house, than she ran first into one room, then into another, into the parlor, the dining-room, and all over the house, and then away into a little room where her mother used to go to pray alone.

"Where is mother?" she cried; "I want mother!"

And when they were compelled to tell her what had happened, she cried out,

"Take me away, take me away! I don't want to be here without mother."

It was the mother made it home to her. And so it is in heaven. It is not so much the white robes, the golden crowns, or the harps of gold, but it is the society we shall meet there.

Who then are there? What company shall we have when we get there?

The Father is there, Jesus is there, the Holy Spirit is there—our Father, our elder Brother, our Comforter.

Who else is there?

The angels are there.

Dear departed friends are there.

And the little ones. Ah, they are there! I cannot speak of heaven without calling to mind the children. Turn to this passage: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 18:10.) "Their angels!" What does that mean? Have we each of us an angel especially appointed to watch over us wherever we go, an angel who makes it his business to attend each of us, and to take charge of us?

These, then, are all in heaven, and we expect to see them there—the Trinity, blessed for ever, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The

holy angels are there. The grand Old Testament saints are there. We shall meet them all—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Job, David, and all the rest of God's saints of former ages. All the New Testament saints, the twelve apostles, all the disciples and followers of the Lord, all the ancient martyrs, all who have loved the Lord from the foundation of the world.

See them all summed up in Hebrews 12:22-24:

"But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED.

Again, in Revelation 5:9, 10, listen to the song they are singing—it will tell us who they are:

"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

Who are these? These are they who on earth trusted Jesus, gave themselves to Him, and were willing to die for Him. They are all there, having been redeemed, and bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Lamb, and they shall reign with Him.

Can we, in the words of Colossians 2:20 and Romans 6:8, say that we are "dead with Christ"? If we can, we can also say, "We believe we shall also live with Him." Can you speak thus of Him: "Christ my Redeemer; Christ my Brother"? He offers to be to you a dearer, nearer friend than any you have on this earth—even a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

"If any man serve Me," we read in John 12: 26, "let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve Me, him will my Father honor." That is the way to get near, yea, to get into, the kingdom of heaven. Serve Christ. He has promised, if you do, that you shall be with Him—"where I am"; that is, in the kingdom of heaven, is it not? Where is He? He is at the right hand of God. Then we shall be there. "Where I am, there shall also My servant be." If we are willing to be His servants on earth, we shall reign with Him in heaven.

Who, then, are to be our companions in that beautiful land on high? We have already enumerated them. The glorious Old Testament saints and heroes, all the redeemed ones that have gone before us, all who have died believing in the Saviour, ever since the world began; all Christ's true followers, of whatever country or tongue, rich or poor. The color of their skin in this world does not matter a bit; all who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They are all there, before the face of our Father in heaven.

Does not this stir us up to desire to be there? Our Lord spoke of it as a deeply-important fact. Read Luke 10: 20: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." The seventy disciples had been sent out on evangelistic work, two and two. They had been over the length and breadth of the land on this mission of love and mercy, preaching Christ's kingdom, and a great and mighty revival had taken place. They came back with great joy, and hastened to Him, exclaiming,

"Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."

But Christ replied, "That is good, and you do well to rejoice; but I can tell you something of far greater importance to rejoice over. It is this: rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

This is subject-matter for our rejoicing. Our names are written there, if we are His. We dare not rest content to find it out only when we die. If we don't find it out when we are on earth, we have not much chance of finding our names in the book of life when we die. The question, then, for every one is this:

IS MY NAME WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE?

But perhaps some one may say that it is downright presumption to talk of knowing that. "How can any one know whether their name is written in the book or not?"

Nevertheless, we are bound to know it; we are neglecting our duty if we do not seek to know it. Listen to the words of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, who says, in 1 John 5:12, "He that hath the Son hath life" —hath eternal life; and who could have such a thing, and not know it? Observe the words; it is *"hath,"* not *"is going to have,"* or *"will have,"* but *"hath"* it, even now. Is it possible you could have this wonderful gift of God, and yet not know it?

Surely such a wonderful gift will show itself in our life and conversation and daily walk, "that all men may take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus." For a season, indeed, it is possible, yea, it often is the case, that we are in darkness, and know not this precious gift of God. But assuredly, if we but seek Him, He will show us His face; and in the clear light of His countenance we will be enabled to "read our title clear to mansions in the skies," to see our names written in the book of life.

Oh, what a comforting thought to the weak and weary Christian—"hath life!" Scripture says so, God says so, Christ says so. In John 5:24 we read: "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." We have already passed from death to life—life eternal, everlasting, life evermore! It has begun already on earth.

Is it too strange and wondrous a truth to believe, too remote, too distant, to fill you with any great joy, the thought that your names are already written in the glorious roll of heaven's inhabitants? Well, you may feel so; but you ought all of you to know it, if you are living near Christ, and walking closely with Him.

Possibly some may say that this is all pure speculation; that we cannot know that our names are written in heaven; that we cannot be certain that there is any such book as the book of life. Well, if the Bible is to decide the question, just read Revelation 21:27; "And there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in *the Lamb's book of life.*" See also Rev. 3:5; Daniel 12:1; and Exodus 32:32, where the same book of life is spoken of. And again, in Philippians 4:3: "And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are *in the book of life.*"

In this passage Paul speaks of it as a matter of course that there is a book of life, and also that they knew that their names were in that precious book.

How could Christ tell His disciples to rejoice that "their names were written" unless they could know it —to rejoice over a thing which they could not be aware of? We can and do know it, if we choose to give diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Is your name gone up before you to be enrolled in that volume? If not, you won't obtain admission to heaven. You may go to its gates, and seek admission; but it will be of no use, if your name is not in the book. None can enter but those "whose names are written in heaven."

THE MANSION MADE READY.

Once when I was travelling to a city, there was a

lady in the car with me. After I had reached the hotel where I was to stay, and had got comfortable quarters, she came and said,

"Oh, sir, I cannot get a room in this hotel; they are quite full! How ever did you manage to get a room?"

"Easily enough," I replied; "I just telegraphed on before that I was coming—to have a room ready for me."

And it is somewhat similar in regard to gaining admission to heaven—your names must be sent on beforehand, and entered in its book, else you won't get in. But get your names inscribed on its pages, and then you won't be disappointed. God will have a mansion ready for you when you ascend to your heavenly home; and when you come to its gates, the guardian angels will refer to the book of life to see if your name is there. If so, pass in; but if not, admittance will be certainly refused!

The great question then, for one and all, is this: Is my name written in the Lamb's book of life? Do not rest content until you know that it is so. Do you ask how you are to know it? Go to Jesus. He says: "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life." "Believeth in Me!" Trust Christ, and you are sure of it; sure of salvation, sure of eternal life, sure of your name being written in the book of life.

THE DYING MOTHER'S CHARGE.

A few years ago a young mother lay dying of consumption. She was drawing very near her end. Just a few days before she died she bade her father bring in the children one by one, that she might see them all once more before she died, and bless them, and bid them farewell. The eldest boy was brought in; she laid her weak hand on his head and prayed for him, and blessed him. Next came a little girl; she prayed for her, and blessed her. And so with the whole family —six of them being brought in one by one. At last

it came to the little baby. Oh, how she loved it! but she must part from it too. It was put into her weak arms; she gave it a last embrace, a loving kiss, and it too was taken away from her. Then she turned to the father, and said,

"I charge you that you bring all these children safely home to heaven."

She wanted to have them round her in the bright land above. Now how could he promise this unless he had the means of knowing when they were safe in the arms of Jesus, that Good Shepherd who alone could lead them all safely home? If it is impossible for us to be certain of our salvation, of our names being in the book of life, then it is impossible for that parent, or for any other father or mother, to fulfil such a charge. But, thank God, it is not impossible, as we have already seen, for us to know, even on earth, whether our own names, or our children's names, are written in the Lamb's book of life. Oh, lead them to Jesus, and be ever in prayer for and with them, and let them see you walking with God, and they will follow!

THE PRAYERLESS FATHER AND THE LOST SON.

I never speak of parents without recalling the cases of two fathers whom I have known.

The one dwelt on the banks of the Mississippi river. He was what the world calls rich and wealthy—rich, that is, in this world's goods. Ah, how little the world knows what true riches are!

His son, a bright little boy, was out playing one day, when a passing car knocked him down and ran over him. He was brought home dying.

The father was sent for. He came home, and found the mother in a desperate state. When he went into the room the boy was lying unconscious. There he lay, white, pale, and motionless.

"Oh!" cried the father, "can nothing be done to save him?"

"No," said the physician; "he is past help, he is dying."

"Well, can nothing be done to bring him to consciousness? He does not know he is dying."

He knew he had never trained the boy to be ready for death.

"We'll try," said the doctor.

In a little while the boy opened his eyes and looked about him. The father bent over him, and said,

"My boy, do you know you are dying?"

"Am I dying?" said the boy; "father, will you pray for me? You have never prayed for me. Am I lost? Oh, father, do pray for me!"

But the father could not pray; the mother could not pray; the physicians could not pray: and before a servant of Christ could be fetched, the boy was dead! Dead, without a word of loving prayer being breathed for him to Almighty God! I leave you to imagine the feelings of that father. His child gone, and never a word of prayer ascended to the Throne on his behalf! See that none of you are ever like him.

A PRAYING FATHER.

I knew another case, which was a direct contrast to the one I have just mentioned. It was that of another father, who was a merchant in business in New York. His son was laid on a bed of sickness. One day when he came home from business, he found his wife in tears.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Our boy has been taken much worse since you left this morning. The doctors say he is dying, and he does not know it," replied the mother.

The father went into the sick-room quietly, and approached the bed where the little sufferer lay. Bending over him gently, he said,

"My boy, do you know you are dying, very likely today?"

The boy looked up in his father's loving face: "Dying am I? Is this dying? Shall I die to-night?"

He was weeping for his son, the great tears rolling down his cheeks.

"Oh, father, don't weep for me; don't cry, father! When I die I am going to heaven, and when I get there I will go right up to Jesus, and tell Him that it was through you I came there."

Ah, my friends, I'd rather have my son bear a testimony like that to the throne of God than have all the riches, all the wealth, all the gold, all the jewels this world ever saw—yes, ten thousand times rather! I'd rather have my son an heir of the kingdom of heaven, and joint-heir with Christ, than have him heir of the grandest and proudest monarch the world ever knew. "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Ah, that's an inheritance worth having, and it's what God offers to us!

We have seen (1) *Where heaven is*—It IS ABOVE. We have also seen (2) *Who are there*—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the blessed angels, and Christ's redeemed ones. We have also spoken about the book Christ keeps of His own people. Now

(3) OUR INHERITANCE IN HEAVEN.

What treasures and glory! Turn to Matthew 19:20, 21. A young man came to Jesus, saying, "I have kept the law, I have done all these things, I want to get to heaven; what lack I yet?" Jesus looked at him, He was sorry for him. His eyes saw what was amiss in the man—the love of riches was his besetting sin. Therefore Christ said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Ah, the man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Jesus was grieved for him. He was very near the kingdom

of heaven, but he missed it. And why? Because his treasure wasn't there, it was here on the earth.

Read Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

OUR TREASURE IS IN HEAVEN,

or, if it is not, it ought to be, if we ever mean to get there ourselves. Lay *not* up treasures on earth. And why not? Because if you have much treasure on earth, you're very apt to have precious little in heaven. The more you have in this world, the less you care about laying up treasure in heaven. Why so? Just because your heart will be here. If a man has saved twenty thousand dollars, his heart will be set upon it: how to keep it, how to spend it, how to divide it out. I need not take much trouble to convince you of this; you know it well enough yourselves. Where your treasure is, your heart is certain to be also. It is quite natural, quite common; you see it every day around you. If a man has invested in a company a large sum of money, his heart is in it, you may be sure. How is the company going to succeed? Shall I gain much? or shall I lose it all? The first thing he does when he gets his newspaper in the morning is to look down the page till he gets to the list of stocks and shares, to see what price the company's shares are quoted at. Ah, his heart is there, sure enough!

The result in many cases is that the man has no time to heed Christ's instruction, to listen to His warning voice. He is too busy laying up for himself treasures on earth. But, remember, if you set your heart upon the treasures of this world, you will be sure to

meet with disappointment. Perhaps you fix some limit, and say,

"When I have got so many thousand dollars I will stop."

But when you do succeed in acquiring the wished for amount, it does not seem so much as you thought. You then resolve to try for a little more before you stop; and so you go on, and will never feel satisfied with these treasures. And even then sorrow may come: your riches may take themselves wings, and fly away.

Men are always looking forward in this world for something that is to yield them happiness; but when they get it, they are disappointed. They exclaim, "Is this all? If I had thought it was like this, I wouldn't have worked so hard for it." How few of us can follow Christ's command—for it is a command—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." What does it profit us to set our hearts on this world? Nothing; it is worse than vanity. Yet men go on living for this world and setting their affections upon it, and when they come to be old and feeble, what good does it do them? They expected happiness; the have none. Their hopes are frustrated, and they go down to the grave mourning.

GOD'S FOOL.

When you come to die, what benefit will your riches be to your soul? None whatever. You will possess nothing: what you had belonged to this earth, and you must leave it behind you. The great question is, What have you in heaven? Alas, if you have never laid anything up there! The world may indeed say, "Such a man has died worth so many thousands or millions"; but in reality he is worth nothing at all if he has not got anything laid up in heaven. The world may call him rich and wise, but God calls him a fool: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be?" Not his own, anyway; very likely they shall be possessed by some

spendthrift son, that has been brought up in great expectations, and he'll soon make the money go.

If I am a child of God, and yet make an idol of my money, of my gifts, of my time, or of anything in this world, then I'll be sure to lose it. God will take it away in love to me, although I won't think it love at the time; but if I work for God, if I spend money, gifts, time, everything I have for Him, then I lay it up in heaven, and that's a very good bank. It won't fail, and I'll have a whole eternity to enjoy it. I shall have it there when I go. This is arithmetic which anyone can understand. And then, your treasure being in heaven, your heart will be there also. The heart is where the treasure is.

You can soon tell where a man's treasure is by his talk. If it is in heaven, he will not be long with you before he's talking about heaven: his heart is there and so his speech isn't long of running there too. If his heart is in money, he will soon have you deep in talk about mines, speculations, stocks, bank rate, and so on. If his heart is in lands, it won't be long before he's talking about estates, improvements, houses, and so on. Always the same, wherever a man's heart is, there his tongue will be sure to go.

Some one has said, if you see a man's goods and furniture come down by the freight train, you're pretty sure he'll be down by the next passenger train; he won't be long after. He'll follow his goods; don't be afraid of that. And so it is with heaven; if your treasure is on before you, you'll be wanting to follow it too, you'll be glad to be on the road there as soon as possible.

TREASURES OF EARTH AND HEAVEN CONTRASTED.

When I first went to San Francisco I went into a Sabbath school. It was a terrible night of rain, cold, and wet. Very few of the teachers or scholars had come. The superintendent said to me he thought he would dismiss the school.

"Will you let me talk to them a bit?"

"Oh, certainly!"

"Have you a black-board?" I said.

"Yes."

Well, I stood up and began talking about heaven. I said,

"Would one of you teachers that's good at writing on the board come forward? I ain't very good at that sort of thing."

One young man came and took the chalk.

"Now," I said, "will you write there what I tell you. I want to speak to the children about the treasures of earth and the treasures of heaven; let us see which will be most. Tell me some of the treasures of earth."

One exclaimed, "Money."

"Write that down," I said.

Another said, ships; another, lands; another, friends; another, love.

Well, we've got written down the treasures of earth. Now what are the treasures of heaven?'

"Jesus," one exclaimed.

"Write it down by the side of the other column," I said.

Salvation, joy, pardon, eternal life, peace, crowns, robes, mansions, the river of life, were mentioned by others. In a very short time this column was five times as long as the other.

"Now, which is best?" I said. "Some people think that the treasures of earth are the reality, and the treasures of heaven visionary things, remote and far distant. But I tell you it is the very opposite; the treasures of this earth, such as they are, are fleeting and short-lived, not for a moment to be compared with the eternal joys of the land above. Treasure above is the reality; treasure here below is but a phantom."

When I ended, the children seemed much impressed, and the young teacher who wrote for me, told me afterwards that it was the means of his salvation. It looked

so strange on the board, he had never imagined heaven was so real. He went home, but could not get it out of his head; he pondered over it, and never rested until he found Christ. He was the first-fruits of my work on the Pacific coast.

I think if any man here would just take his pencil from his pocket, and write on a piece of paper the treasures of earth and the treasures of heaven, it would not be long before he would be seeking to lay up treasures for himself on high.

A friend of mine was once taken by an old man to see his riches. He took him to a splendid mansion, and said, "This is all mine." He pointed him to a little town—"That is mine; it is called by my name." He pointed him to a rolling prairie—"That is all mine; the sun never shone on a finer prairie than that, so fruitful and rich, and it's all mine." In another direction he showed him fertile farms extending for thirty miles—"These are all mine." He took him into his grand house, showed him his beautiful pictures, his costly gold plate, his jewels, and still he said, "These are all mine. This grand hall I have built; it is called by my name, there is my insignia on it; and yet I was once a poor boy. I have made it all myself."

My friend looked at him. "Well, you've all this on earth; but what have you got up there in heaven?"

"Up where?" said the old man.

"Up in heaven."

"Well, I'm afraid I haven't got much up there."

"Ah," said my friend, "but you've got to die, to leave this world; what will you take with you of all these things? You will die a beggar; for all these riches count as nothing in the kingdom of heaven. You will be a pauper; for you have no inheritance with the saints above."

The poor old man (he was poor enough in reality, though rich in all the world's goods), burst into tears. He had no hope for the future. In four months' time

he was dead; and where is he now? He lived and died without God, and without hope in this world or the next.

Lay not up treasure down here. God commands you not to do it, and you must obey. Lay it not up on earth, but lay it up in heaven. God does not forbid that: store up as much as you like there. Gather your treasure there. It will lead you upward.

THE WATER-LOGGED SHIP.

When I was crossing the Atlantic I saw a vessel floating, and yet not moving; she was lying like a dead log. I could not understand it. I made inquiry, and found she was what they called water-logged. She had sprung a leak and filled with water, but her cargo being wood she could not sink; but still she could not sail, and had just to be abandoned, and her cargo lost. Now, that's just what's the matter with many of us. How many are like water-logged vessels! You lie useless; you cannot sail for heaven, because you are so laden with this world's treasures and goods that you cannot move a bit. You cannot even begin the journey; your time is so much taken up with this world's affairs, that you have no leisure to think about heaven.

I don't wonder at it, for the reason is that you have no treasure in heaven, nothing to attract you there. Your heart is here in this world; and when you leave it you will leave behind you all you care for—your all. What we want, my friends, is treasure in heaven to attract our hearts up there. Then the world will have very little influence over us. Our hopes will be all fixed on things above.

It's just like men going up in a balloon; when they have ascended a little height, things down here begin to look very small indeed. What had seemed very grand and imposing, now seem as mere nothings. And the higher they rise, the smaller everything on earth appears—it gets fainter and fainter as they rise,

till the railway train, dashing along at express speed, seems just like a thread and scarcely appears to be moving at all, and the grand piles of buildings seem now like mere dots. So it is when we get near heaven; earth's treasures, earth's cares look very small and trifling.

And again, when men go up in a balloon, they carry with them what they call ballast, that is, small bags of sand, and when they want to rise higher they just throw out some of the sand. So must we if we want to rise nearer heaven, just throw out some of the sand and cast aside every weight. We won't rise higher till we do so.

But you say, "I can't throw my money into the street; I have made it and saved it, and I am not going to waste it."

Oh no, you'll soon find a good use for it if you want to, and thus you may get rid of some of the ballast that is holding you on the way to heaven. When you are enabled thus to lend to the Lord, to put your money in His bank, the world will soon lose its power with you.

STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS.

When Abraham once caught sight of the holy city with the eyes of his understanding, which were opened to see its glories, then it was that he "confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, and that he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He had no desire to stay here—heaven was his home—so much brighter, so much better than anything he could find here below. We must all feel we are but pilgrims and sojourners here, our home is above. Our feet are often weary, and our hearts heavy; but never mind that. Let us look forward to that "city which hath foundations." Weary we may be, and often are, but, blessed be God, there is a place of rest! There is rest for the weary there. A great many look upon the Christian church

on earth as a place of rest. Never was a greater mistake. The church is no place of rest; it is a place of work. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Hebrews 4:9.)

"If Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day." Do you look for that rest here? There is none. If you are resting you are neglecting your duty, you are shirking your work, and will never enjoy heaven thoroughly. It's the weary only who know what true rest is. "Work while it is called to-day." Be up and doing. That which your hand findeth to do in your Master's vineyard, do it with all your might. "Be not weary in well-doing: for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not." Blessed be God, "there remaineth a rest"! No rest here below; nothing but toil and labor. And you will enjoy your rest all the more when you come to the beautiful land above. You must work for Him while you are here. If the church is looking for her rest here, then she cannot make a greater blunder; she will never get rest in this world. There are always trials, and tribulations, and labors here. The rest is up yonder where Christ is. Don't be weary with your work; don't be thinking that everything is against you, that you seem to be doing little good. Work on, hope on, pray on!

TAUGHT BY A DREAM.

I once heard of a good Christian man who began and for a time worked well for the Lord. But he grew weary; his heart failed him; he saw no fruits, and he longed to be at rest. In this state of mind he lay down in his bed one night, and had a dream. He was up in heaven, walking its golden streets with two friends of his, who had died some time before. He thought he saw a chariot of gold coming towards them as they talked. It stopped when it came up to where they were, and, lo, Jesus Himself was in it! He took his two friends, and lifted them into the chariot. Then the Son

of God took him away to the battlements of heaven, and said,

"Look over these; what do you see?"

"I see nothing but a great dark pit," said the man.

"Look again," said Christ.

He looked, and behold, he saw men groping about in the darkness, and many of them stumbling over the edge of that horrible abyss, having no one to warn them of danger, and guide them to light and safety, and the beauties above them in heaven.

"Now," said the Son of God, "will you remain here and enjoy the beauties of heaven, or will you go for a time and speak to these poor benighted men, and try to lead them out of darkness into light?"

The man awoke, and it was but a dream; yet the effect it had upon him was such that he devoted the rest of his life to the work of the Lord.

OUR REWARD FUTURE.

Some Christians make a mistake in looking for their reward here below on earth, and they are disappointed because they do not obtain it. This is a great blunder; for the apostle tells us in 2 Tim. 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." Not in this life, but in the life to come; at that great day we shall receive a crown. See again Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." You needn't be looking for it on earth; it is "in heaven." The world won't reward you. No; it will hate you, and curse you, and slay you, if it can; for "so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Ah, if you are expecting a reward down here, you're sure to be disappointed; your hope will be frustrated!

Sometimes a man relaxes in his work for the Lord, and seems to lose his strength, and fails to speak for Christ as he used to do. And why? Just because he

has been looking for a reward in this world. And what has he received? Nothing but laughter and mockery. What does the world care for him? Thus he falls back, and becomes discouraged; he begins to faint by the way. Such failure comes from looking for a reward in this world.

When a man is thought much of in this world, it is quite likely Christ won't have much to say for him in the next world. Christ's loved ones are despised and hated: "Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." They have to put up with all kinds of contempt and contumely; that's what Christ's people have to endure here. Ah, and we'll have to bless God for it all! It keeps us from linking ourselves with this world, from setting all our hopes and desires upon it.

NOT OF THE WORLD.

If we are to serve Christ and to reach heaven, we must sail right against the world and its ways. It's an old saying that a dead fish always swims with the current; and we can always tell the living fish when we see it swimming against the current. And in like manner, if you are dead, you will very likely be sailing smoothly enough with this world, and very well satisfied with yourself; but if you are alive in Christ Jesus, you will be struggling with might and main against the world, its sins and temptations, and you will be seeking to win souls for Christ, regardless of the world's scoffs, and sneers, and frowns. But be not discouraged, although the way be rough and weary. Look up beyond, there is reserved for you a "great reward in heaven"—up in heaven, beyond the clouds, the sorrows, and the tears. Oh, my friends, if God calls that reward "GREAT," how great must it be! We perhaps would call it great, even if it had not been very much, for we are accustomed to little things; but when God calls it "GREAT," we may be sure it is something to look for-

ward to. See, then, that you are looking to heaven for your reward.

Paul and Silas didn't get much reward on this earth. The world held them in very little esteem. It imprisoned, and stoned, and at last killed them. But what a reward they've got now up there, where Christ stands at the right hand of God! "In weariness, in hunger and thirst often, in cold and nakedness": that's what Paul got; that was his reward. But did he grow discouraged? I reckon not; he would not have been the successful apostle he was if he had grown weary. Stripes often, stoned, cold, perils of sea, perils by land!

"Ain't you wearied yet, Paul? I expect you'll be giving up this preaching soon."

"Giving up? giving up? no, never! 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'"

Ah, that's how they repaid Paul down here! They paid with stripes: "Five times have I received forty stripes save one." I fancy some fellow saying again to him,

"Well, Paul, ain't you going to stop this talking and praying now? You'd better be going home to your folks to rest in peace."

"Stop this preaching? No, 'I press toward the mark.'" "I press." He was not looking for pay or reward on earth. No, it was up yonder, where Christ dwells; it was there he was looking for his reward for evermore.

The world served the Son of God in the same way. He came to bless, and not to curse. For three years He went about doing all the good He could find to do: healing the sick, casting out devils, opening the eyes of the blind, making the lame to leap like a hart, raising the very dead out of their graves. Never a poor sick one came to Him but he was healed. Christ couldn't pass a poor beggar but his heart yearned for him. And yet, how did the world repay Him? Did it worship Him? build a fine house for Him? put up

a statue in His honor? No, not a bit. It hung Him to a tree; it shouted, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" It preferred the thief and murderer to Him, the holy One. It yelled out, "His blood be on our heads!" And his blood is on the world's head to this day. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

SAVED, YET SO AS BY FIRE.

But now He is waiting above to reward those who serve Him, who will work for Him. I have an idea that there are thousands of crownless saints in heaven. They just barely get in at the doors. They have indeed been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; but there is no reward for them. They have sought their own ease in this world; they have not sought to work for Christ here below; therefore, though admitted to heaven, they enjoy no distinguished reward. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." None of those that have lost heart, and have given up working for the Master here, will shine as the stars, or receive the great reward hereafter. For those careless ones there is no bright glory, no place near the throne; they have just got in at the gates, that's all.

When I read the life of some of the brave old Christians, godly men, striving for their Lord, it makes me feel quite ashamed of my own Christianity. Talk about Christianity nowadays, just look at the life, look at the struggles, look at the burning anxiety for souls, of those men of old! They lived for Christ and His cause. Their motto, "None but Christ; none but Christ." Work, suffering, pain, trials, death itself, nothing came amiss that was sent by the Master! You must do something for Christ if you would win the reward of diligent labor in His service.

Young man, what are you going to do for Christ?

Be up and doing; look up and see the great and blessed reward awaiting you. You will enjoy heaven, if you serve Christ on earth. Think not of any reward here; again I say, look up, look beyond! and there you will find "an exceeding great reward." Then He will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And when we are called by Him to arise and come home, it will be with joy.

OH, WHAT A HOME-COMING

that will be! It is for you, my dear friends, who have been serving him here below. He calls you; the Master calls you. Would you wish to stay? No. When He calls, you will arise and meet Him with joy. You will rejoice to follow Him. Follow Him on the earth, and you will follow Him from the earth to heaven. Rejoice, then, rejoice; for "great is your reward in heaven." Praise God for this look-out He has given us into the future, in order to strengthen our hearts for the trials of this life.

We have grown so cold nowadays, we have very little praise; but when good king Jehoshaphat marched to battle, it was with songs of praise triumphing ever beforehand; for his faith was strong. And the Lord gave him victory. When Paul and Silas were shut up they praised God, even there in the prison, with their feet fast in the stocks. They sang; and when the jailer told them to hold their tongues, they just sang so much the more, that the very foundations of the prison were shaken. And God delivered them. They praised God for His goodness, and God said amen to it, and opened the doors for them. They would praise God still more afterward, when they saw that their faith had been the salvation of that jailer and his family.

Again, look at "Paul the aged," old and feeble as he was, led up the streets of Rome to his death. Rome

never in all her days of triumphant warfare had known such a conqueror as this man, who is going quietly to his death, faithful to God, even to death!

"Ah, Paul! don't you tremble now? See, what has all your preaching done for you? You're going to be put to death. Come, now, just give it up, and they'll let you off. Ain't you afraid?"

"Afraid!" says Paul, "no, indeed! I've had stripes, prisons, beatings with rods, stoned, shipwrecked three times, perils of fire, perils of sword, but none of these things move me. This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

And what was the result? On the page of history his name is written as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus, who could endure hardness like a soldier should. As one of God's faithful ones, who feared not the face of man, he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing." Aye, he could say, "I have kept the faith!" Blessed be God! Paul is not dead; he lives up there; and at the day of Christ's appearing he shall receive an unfading crown of glory from his Saviour.

Oh, may God give us all grace to work for Him while here, that all of us, men and women, may be "about our Father's business!" Work while it is called to-day—work in faith, and look up. There—there is our rest, our reward, our home, our crown! We'll get it all by and by. Forget, then, selfish pleasures, and work—work for Christ; and He'll make it all up to us in the world to come.

Perhaps some of you say, "I've no treasure in heaven yet, but I would like to have. I think it's worth trying for; but how am I to overcome the world, and the sinful propensities of this body of sin?"

The one only way is given in John 3:3: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Then you inquire, "How can I be born again?"

The answer is found in Acts 16:31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou *shalt* be saved."

"Oh," but you reply, "I believed on Him long ago! I know that He is the Son of God; I know that He died on the cross for sin."

Ay, but the devils also believe and tremble. Do you believe that Christ died for YOU individually? that He has saved YOU? that He has redeemed YOU with His own precious blood? That's what is wanted—a real personal faith in a personal Saviour. You do believe, you say; then I tell you on the authority of the Word of God, YOU ARE SAVED. "He that believeth, HATH eternal life." Not *"is to have it,"* but already *"has it"* abiding in him.

THE ANCHORED BOAT.

I once heard of two men in America who were under the influence of liquor. They came down at night to where their boat was tied. They wanted to return home, so they got in and began to row. They pulled away hard all night, wondering why they never got to the other side of the bay. When the grey dawn of morning broke, behold, they had never loosed the mooring line or raised the anchor!

That's just the way with many who are striving to enter the kingdom of heaven. They cannot believe, because they are tied to this world. Cut the cord! cut the cord! Set yourselves free from the clogging weight of earthly things, and you will soon rise heavenward.

DEATH HAS LOST ITS STING.

One day a man who was a consumptive came up to me and said,

"I don't see how I can be saved; how I can get con-

verted. I know Christ has died for me, and yet I don't feel I'm saved."

I tried to set before him the only true and living way, CHRIST JESUS. I tried to show him God's way, not my own way; however, he went away still unhappy.

Next day he came, and said, "Now I see it all—Christ has died for me; He has redeemed me with His own blood. I feel I have not long to live; but I am not sore afraid and terrified as I previously was. Death has lost its sting."

He went away, and in a short time after I heard that his fatal disease had brought him to the grave; but he was better far in the land above.

When I was a young man, and I had not seen much of the world, I was talking one day about death, and said,

"The righteous have no fear in their death."

A man came forward, and said, "How can you talk in that way? I have seen a great many die, and I can tell you there is no difference between the saint and the sinner; they all die alike."

I wondered how that could be, but could not contradict him from experience, never having seen anyone die. But very soon after that the war of 1861 broke out. It pleased God to call me to work amongst the wounded and dying. Ah, then I saw plenty of death! And now I know there is a difference between the latter end of the righteous and the sinner. I have seen a man cursing and calling upon God to damn his soul, and I have seen him die with that oath on his lips—taken at his word. Others I have seen cold and sullen, not caring what became of their soul. Others in all the conscious agonies of a lost soul, that felt its days on earth were ended, and that it was not saved. I have heard the screams of despair from those who were without hope. And I have also witnessed scenes of calm, placid death, even of joyous triumphant departure to be with Christ, on the part of those who had their feet on the Rock of Ages. And now I tell you

there is a difference, a great difference, as much difference as between day and night, or as between light and darkness.

Never shall I forget one day coming down the Tennessee river after the battle of Pittsburg Landing. The boat was laden with the wounded going to the hospital —many of them only to die. There were 450 men on board, every one of them in agony. Think of that! I said to the doctor in charge, who was a godly man,

"The great cry of these poor fellows is for water. Let us go and give them water; and as we pour into their parched lips earthly water, let us seek to speak to them of the Water of Life."

He said, "Very well."

I went off and commenced at once. As I passed along I came to one young man lying unconscious. I think he was the finest young man I have ever seen. The calm, noble look upon his face was so grand. I ran to the doctor.

"Can nothing be done to arouse this young man? I want to know before he dies if he is safe in Christ."

"Well," he said, "we have had to amputate one of his legs, and he has lost so much blood that he can't live; but perhaps some stimulant may bring him to for a little."

I took a cup of it in my hand, and went to him, gave him two or three spoonfuls; but still no sign of life.

I turned to the next bed, and said to the soldier who was lying watching me,

"Do you know this young man?"

"Know him! yes, I should think so. He's my chum; we were born in the same village, we were brought up together, and we joined the army together."

"Has he any parents?"

"His father died a long time since; his mother is still living; he's her only son."

"Any sisters?"

"He has one."

"Is his mother a good woman?"

"Yes, she's a real Christian, and so is his sister."

I paused; I trembled to ask the next question. I was so afraid he might be dying without hope, and his dear mother and sister been praying for him. At last I said,

"Can you tell me if he's a Christian?"

"A Christian! why, bless you, sir, he was the best man in the regiment. He was always praying; and he put us all to shame, he was so good."

Oh, how thankful I was to hear that! And I hoped before he died he would recover consciousness sufficiently to send a message to his dear mother and sister.

His comrade told me his name, and I put my mouth near his ear, and called out to him,

"Henry, do you know where you are?"

After a bit he opened his eyes, and looked about him, and then said,

"Yes, I know now; I am going home to my mother."

"Ah," I said, "I am afraid you will never see her in this world; you are dying!"

He looked up in my face, and the recollection of the battle and of his wounds came back to him.

"Have you no message I can send home to your mother?" I said.

At the word *home* he looked up again, and said,

"Tell my mother that I died

TRUSTING IN THE LORD,

that I am gone home."

He was then sinking fast, but repeated feebly, "Tell my mother—tell my sister—I died—trusting—in the—Lord; I am—going home. Tell them—to follow me,—to come—home."

He lay back unconscious, and in four hours he was at home in glory.

Was not that a death worth dying—the death of the righteous? Baalam said long ages ago, "Let me die

the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his!" That soldier left a bright testimony in his triumphant departure. Will your latter end be cloudless like his? Is your name, like his, written in the Lamb's book of life?

In one of the hospitals during the war the doctor heard one of the soldiers exclaim loudly,

"Here, here!"

He ran up to his bedside, thinking he wanted something.

"What is it?"

"They are calling the roll-call of heaven, and I was answering to my name."

At the last moments of his life his eyes and ears were opened to the things of eternity. He lay back and expired; he had gone to join the armies of God in the sky.

Oh, choose this day,—will you go to the home God has prepared for His own people? Will you join the band that is marching heavenward? Will you enroll your name in the Lamb's book of life? Will you leave everything and "press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling"?

If you will, I am here to tell you that eternal glory awaits you. A crown of life will be yours. Jesus will receive you and usher you into the mansion He has prepared for you. See, heaven's gates are open; the golden light is even now streaming down upon us! Won't you come, won't you all come to yon heavenly home? Who will dare to refuse?

Oh, may God in heaven grant that you all may be brought to His everlasting rest! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

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